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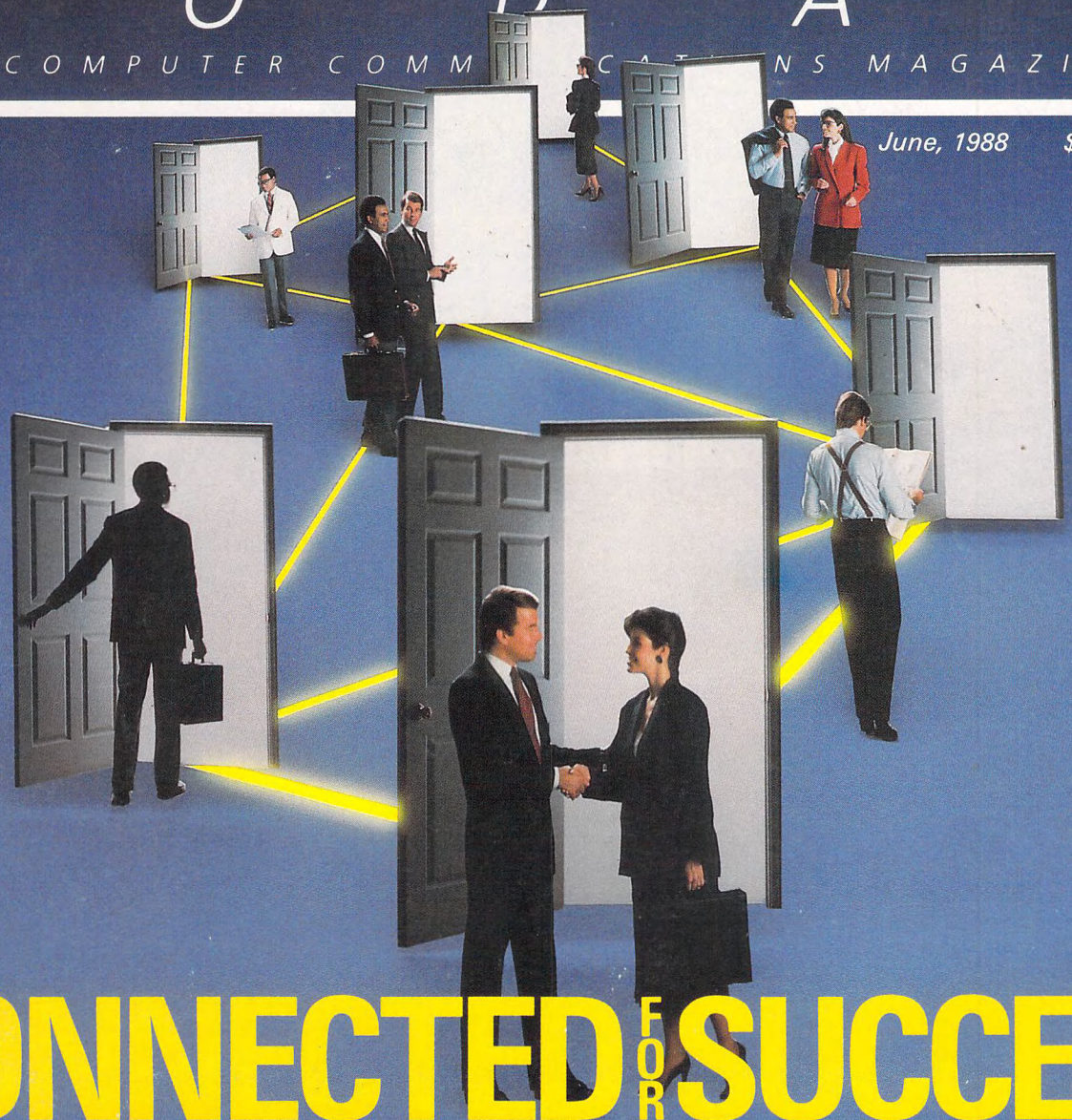

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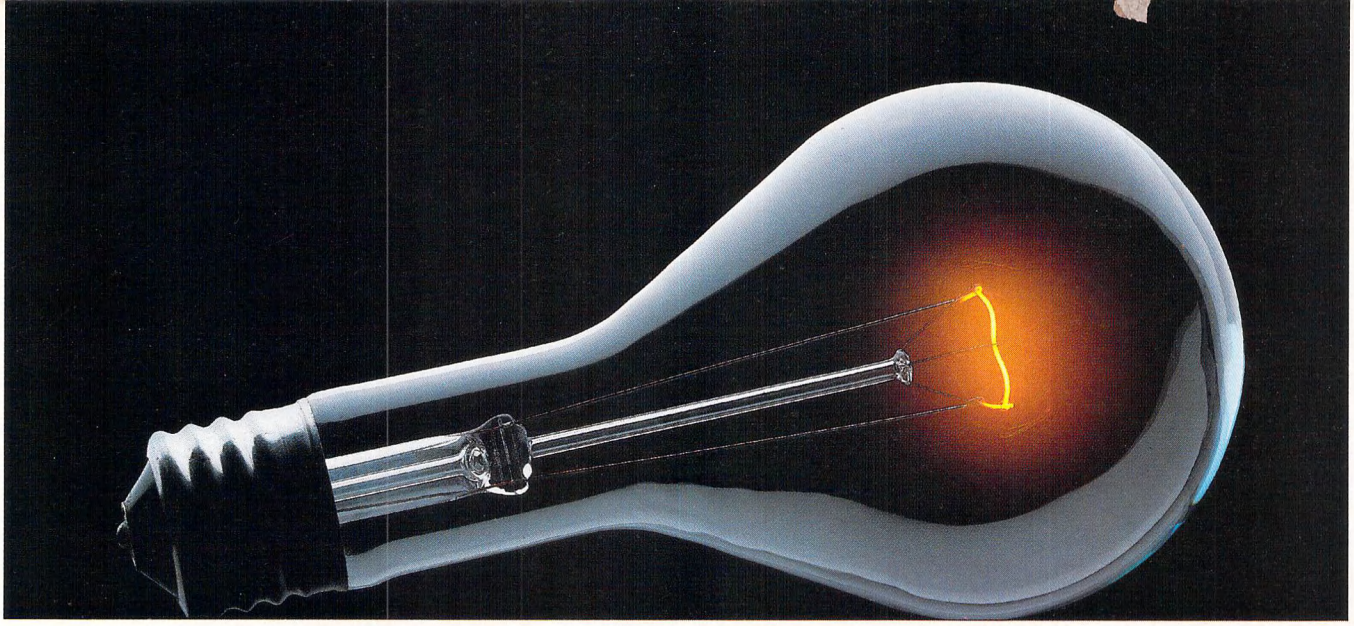

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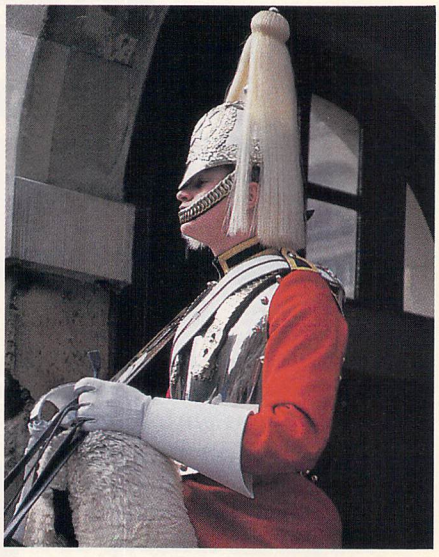

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Catch computer industry news as it happens, keep up with online events, read special reports, commentary and more product reviews. You'll find it only in *Online Today Daily Edition*, a daily-updated newspaper full of information that's too hot to print. GO OLT.

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*Professional Connection requires an IBM PC or compatible computer, a 360 KB disk drive or larger (double-sided), MS DOS 2.0 or higher, 320K memory, a modem, and a monitor. Display requirements: Color Graphics Board, Enhanced Color Graphics Board, Monochrome Board, Paradise Board, Hercules Board, the display built into the Tandy 1000, 2000, or Data General One. IBM is a registered trademark of International Business Machines Corporation.

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DEAR READER

"Networking" is a term that has more than one meaning in the online world. While the non-technical definition of "networking" has fallen on hard times, a more useful hybrid of the practice is still very much alive in CompuServe's forums. And it is more than a social game — it's a hands-on tool for serious entrepreneurs and professionals. As the administrator of the International Entrepreneurs' Network points out, most participants in his forum are fast-moving "doers" who log on for advice and problem-solving tips from others who have "been there."

If you've ever thought about running your own business or are grappling with the problems of one now in progress, you will find interactive tools such as the Entrepreneurs' Network to be invaluable. And professionals of every stripe will find the same camaraderie and quality, instantaneous advice in any of more than a dozen professional forums now operating on CompuServe — medicine, law, education, computer science, public relations, journalism, to name just a few.

If you haven't yet tapped these professional resources, we invite you to an offline introduction beginning on page 14 in this month's cover feature, "Professionals Connect for Success." Focused features for entrepreneurs and people who work from home are found on pages 18 and 19.

* * *

Do you own an IBM PC or compatible? Be sure not to miss this month's Computing Services section. In it you'll find a complete rundown on Professional Connection version 3, CompuServe's latest communications software for the IBM and its cousins. PC3 now supports three graphics standards and a host of new and upgraded features. Find out more in our PC3 roundup and tutorial beginning on page 24.

* * *

As the presidential campaign heats up this summer, you'll want to stay informed with Campaign Hotline, a new service from the American Political Network. The Hotline has been lauded by media insiders as "the bible of US political information." Now you have access to this daily-updated source of behind-the-scenes political information. For a detailed profile, turn to page 21. To access the service, type GO HOTLINE at any CompuServe Information Service system prompt.

Douglas G. Branstetter
Editor

ONLINE TODAY

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LETTERS

Boston Computer Exchange

Having read "Micro Buyers, Sellers to Trade Through BCE" (April, p. 31), I was excited about the online version of the Boston Computer Exchange. I could use that service now, but there was no address or phone number given for me to contact until the service is online.

Linda Fuchs
Columbus, Ohio

Editor's Note: The Boston Computer Exchange is now online. To access it, type GO BCE at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

Print Edition Format

I like the print edition of *Online Today* and have a question related to the format. I often want to keep *Online Today* articles; however, if I tear out a page, I run the risk of ruining the article and my copy of the magazine loses its value as a permanent reference. On the other hand, if I simply save the magazines, I'm lost when it comes time to find certain articles, such as all articles pertaining to IQuest. Is there something you can do to address this need?

Don Hinkle
Green Village, N.J.

Online Searching

I was disappointed in your comments in the Dear Reader column (April, p. 4). I resent the reference to "dark, fetid library bookstacks" and the implication that library research is such drudgery.

Online services are part of most research libraries today—they are seen as one way to help individuals find information. Our library makes use of Dialog and BRS After Dark, and one of our faculty members accesses CompuServe for his own research.

I'm sure that IQuest, including Smartscan, is a fine research tool. However, the writer of the cover article, "Amazing Answers" (p. 20) did not talk about the frustrations inherent in online searching. For example, why don't database producers allow the free use of an online thesaurus if one is available? Regardless of how user-friendly a database is, using the wrong search strategy results in needless difficulties.

The searches done by the writer resulted in good information, but she must be an experienced searcher. I don't think the average person can use online searching without constantly refining the search methods.

A non-frequent user is likely to be frustrated by the lack of uniformity among databases and the lack of logic in many of them. I don't intend to sound like a disparager of these services; I use them every day and realize their problems.

Libraries provide a low-cost service to people, and databases are part of that repertoire.

Scott Cohen
Reference Librarian
Jackson State Community College
Jackson, Tenn.

The article "Amazing Answers" misrepresents the process of doing online searching for marketing research.

The writer expresses disappointment when her search of professional journals results in only 64 "hits." Whether 64 hits is an acceptable result for an online search depends on several factors, including how many hits you should expect from your source, whether those hits are truly on target for your needs, and how much time and money you have to spend to look through the information that results from your online search. Without answers to those questions, there is no way to make an objective value judgment about the results.

In another example, the writer says she "hit gold with 289 articles." For the task described in the article, 289 hits are far too many. A more tightly-focused search might have resulted in the 10 to 20 articles that are really pertinent.

Also, the article lists the cost for the 289-hit search on IQuest as $20. Actually, $20 would have paid for the first 10 citations of the initial successful search (resulting in 64 hits) and the first 15 citations (and one full-text article) from the writer's final search (resulting in 289 hits). Each subsequent abstract of the former would cost $2 and each full-text article from the latter would cost $10. Finally, there are costs associated with running the search a second time to get additional abstracts or citations.

If a reader followed the steps in the ice cream parlor example, he or she would either have no idea whether opening an ice cream parlor was a good idea or would have spent more money than intended.

As a professional information broker and consultant to other brokers, I am distressed by this misrepresentation.

John H. Everett
Irving, Texas

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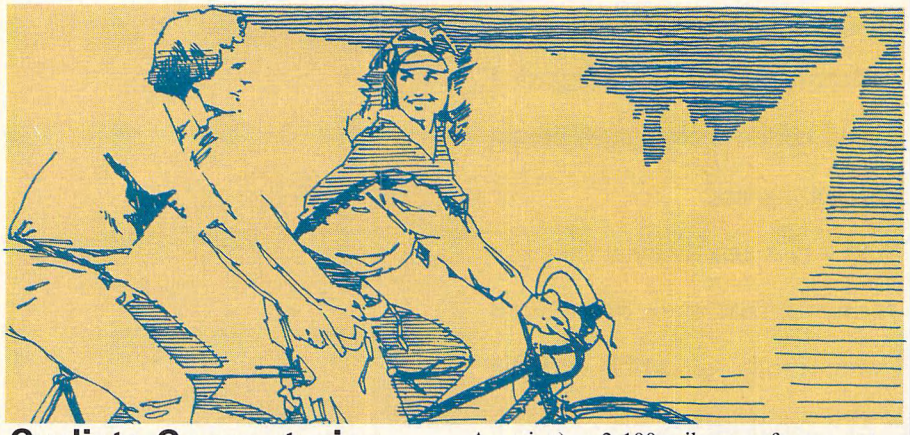


Cyclists Computerize Communications

Cycling went high-tech years ago when super-lightweight frames and carbon-composite wheels made their debut. Now cyclists themselves have taken a computerized turn. One of the country's foremost regional bicycling organizations, the Bloomington Bicycle Club, has joined the national Ultra-Marathon Cycling Association to sponsor electronic communications for its members.

The UMCA is the sanctioning organization for cyclists who ride and race long distances. Formed in 1980, the UMCA organizes RAAM (Race Across America), a 3,100-mile race from west to east coast, considered perhaps the most grueling sporting event in the world.

Now members of both organizations can use their computers to find racing events, schedule registrations and trade tips. Perhaps even more important to cycling enthusiasts, the new communications system allows up-to-the-minute computerized results, during and after sanctioned races.

Cyclists interested in using the system can contact the Bloomington (Ind.) Bicycle Club at 812/332-9926.

On CompuServe, cycling enthusiasts meet in the Outdoor Forum (GO OUTDOORFORUM).

Computing Solutions for Communities

Storm water and sewage problems are a serious concern for many communities. Smaller municipalities cannot afford full-time civil engineers, and many have to hire expensive engineering consulting firms when existing facilities prove inadequate—typically when new construction is considered.

The Army Corps of Engineers Construction Engineering Research Laboratory in Illinois has a software package that can keep these costs in line.

Now available to civilian personal computer users, the Computerized Evaluation of Utility Plans consists of computer programs that analyze existing sanitary sewage collection and storm drainage systems. The programs enable users to determine what modifications must be made to existing utility systems to meet future needs.

Although originally developed for use on large mainframe computers, CEUP has been adapted for IBM PC or compatible computers equipped with an 8087 math coprocessor.

Additional information is available from the Army Corps of Engineers at 217/373-7270.

—James Moran

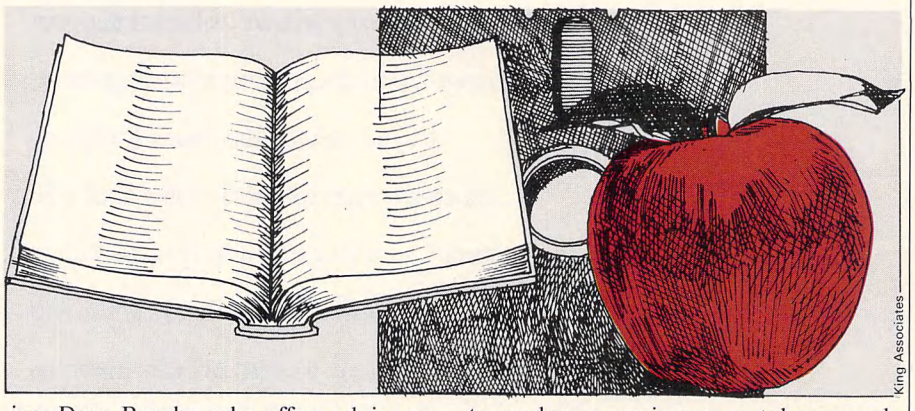
Teachers Consult Software Directories

Once considered a luxury or even a frill, educational software is now a competitive necessity as educational computing transcends the experimental stage to become an integral part of the classroom.

With 28 percent of all software written for educational purposes, trying to figure out the best programs to buy may be more difficult than teaching a child to use a computer. Two directories are available to help teachers and parents make those decisions.

Software for Schools (R.R. Bowker, 1987, $49.95) is designed as a one-stop shopping guide to educational microcomputer software from US publishers and distributors. The directory offers information and guidance on nearly 8,000 programs, classifying them by title, subject, grade level and hardware.

Also included are practical articles by software experts Robert Spivak, who discusses the selection and evaluation process; Babs Maltenfort, who analyzes the pros and cons of networking; Dana Brooks, who offers advice on managing software in the educational setting; and Patricia Sturdevant, who looks at the past and future of classroom computers.



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For information or to order, contact Customer Service, R.R. Bowker, P.O. Box 766, New York, NY 10011; 800/521-8110 or 212/337-6934.

Peterson's Guides, long known for college directories, has published *Directory of Software Sources for Higher Education* (Peterson's, 1988, $29.95).

This is the definitive resource guide to producers, reviewers, catalogers and other groups involved in higher-education software. The directory will be especially useful for those responsible for finding appropriate software for the campus community.

For information or to order, contact Peterson's Guides, 166 Bunn Dr., P.O. Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543-2123; 609/924-5338. Peterson's is also online, offering a search database ideal for selecting a college (GO PETERSONS).

—Cathryn Conroy

Big Bird Explains Modem Connection

Explaining state-of-the-art technology to an adult can be difficult enough, but describing such matters to preschool children is best left to Big Bird.

On a recent broadcast of PBS' award-winning "Sesame Street," the giant yellow bird taught a lesson in modem communication and how it benefits the handicapped.

Luis, who operates the Sesame Street Fix-It Shop, wanted a book on car repair from the library, so he sent a message on his computer to Linda, the deaf librarian. Linda sent a message that she found the book and Luis could pick it up. As each message was exchanged, Big Bird raced from the Fix-It Shop computer to the library computer to make sure the message was transmitted. Although our feathered friend was left panting for breath, the lesson was effective.

—Cathryn Conroy

R&D Rate Dropping

Growth in total US expenditures for research and development is expected to drop in 1988 to its lowest rate since 1977, reports the National Science Foundation.

Total national spending for research and development, says the NSF, will be about $132 billion, a 3 percent real increase after taking inflation into account. In contrast, the growth rate was 4 to 5 percent per year from 1978 to 1982, and increased to 6 to 8 percent from 1982 to 1985, before dropping back to 4 percent during 1986 and 1987. According to the NSF, the growth slowdown in recent years is attributable to smaller spending increases from both government and industry.

The proportion of US gross national product spent on research and development has remained essentially unchanged at 2.7 percent since 1985, after rising steadily from 2.1 percent of the GNP in 1978.

Of the estimated $132 billion in national research and development expenditures in 1988, $65 billion is expected from federal spending, $63 billion from industry, $2.9 billion from universities and colleges, and $1.5 billion from non-profit organizations.

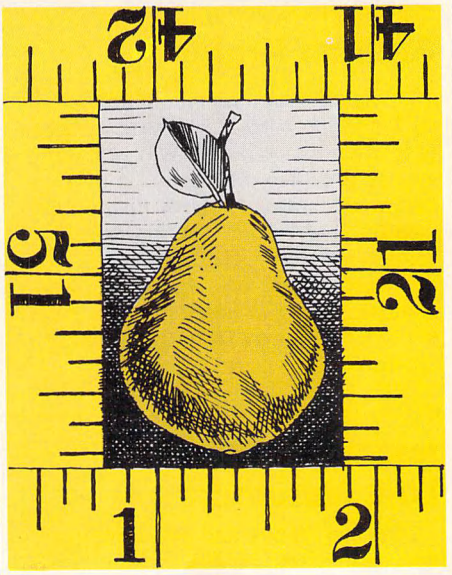
Additional details are available from Elizabeth Michael, NSF Division of Science Resources Studies, 1800 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20550; 202/634-4627.

Dialing Directory for Cellular Callers

Cellular phones are catching on. In the United States, there are more than 1 million in use, and the number is increasing daily.

For those who travel extensively with their phones, *The Cellular Telephone Directory* should make placing and receiving calls throughout North America easier. The book details cellular services in more than 100 cities.

The $14 paperback is available from Communications Publishing at 415/968-9358. Call from your car.



High Tech for High Heft

Just in time for summer, Sutton Communications, a La Jolla, Calif.-based firm, has released Munch, a program for IBM computer owners whose "software" is anything but vaporous.

Munch brings high technology to computer users who want to lighten up a bit. In addition to tracking daily food consumption, Munch analyzes the amount of food eaten and determines how many calories, fats, carbohydrates and proteins are ingested during the day.

Sutton Communications can be reached at 619/456-1701.

On CompuServe, help for the overweight can be found in the "Weighty Matters" section of the Human Sexuality Forum (GO HSX) and in the Health Forum's Overeaters Anonymous support group (GO GOODHEALTH).

—James Moran

Visually Impaired Get Screen Help

IBM has introduced a "screen reader" that enables blind and visually impaired users to hear the text displayed on a Personal System/2's monitor.

The Screen Reader features an 18-key keypad, adaptive hardware, software and documentation on a diskette and audio-cassette. Braille documentation is also available. The Screen Reader requires a text-to-speech synthesizer and either a speaker or headset.

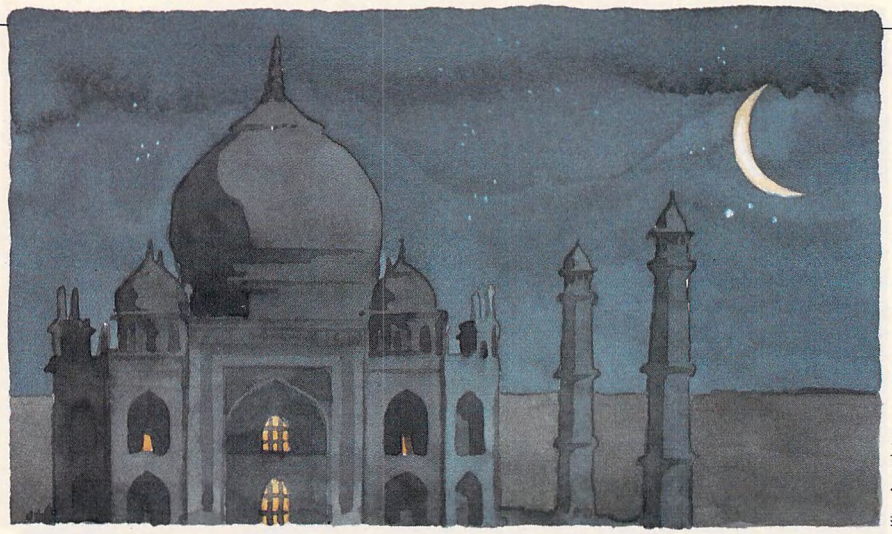
The keypad, which connects to the computer's system unit at its pointing device port, leaves the computer keyboard dedicated to the software application in use, separating Screen Reader commands from application-related commands. The keypad also enables a user to control how text will be spoken—at what pace and either by character, word, line, sentence, paragraph, or full or partial screen.

The Screen Reader can be used to run applications on a single computer or to share information in a network of personal computers or with a larger central computer.

The Screen Reader is the first product developed by the Entry Systems Division's Special Needs Systems organization in Boca Raton, Fla. The IBM National Support Center for Persons with Disabilities, based in Atlanta, Ga., will provide marketing and technical support for the Screen Reader, which costs $600, not including the text-to-speech synthesizer and speaker or headset. It can be ordered through IBM's Direct Response Operations by calling 800/IBM-2468.

On CompuServe, users can find disability resource information and support in the Handicapped Users' Database (GO HUD) and the Disabilities Forum (GO DISABILITIES).

—John Edwards



King Associates

Arabian Nights

A Saudi Arabian millionaire thought he found the perfect software application when his computer was programmed to organize the operation of his harem, according to the British publication *Computer Talk*. The machine printed a weekly schedule for the Arabian nights, but, not recognizing the frailties of human flesh, failed to schedule any time away from the rigors of the harem.

"The computer has gone haywire," says one of Saleh-el-Modiia's four wives. "It's making Saleh too exhausted; he just falls asleep in my arms."

Saleh-el-Modiia seems unperturbed about his wives' complaining. He believes that the computer's only mistake was to schedule visits with all four wives at once. That one instance occurred while Saleh was hospitalized. *Computer Talk* did not reveal Saleh's medical problem.

—James Moran

NSF and NASA Link Networks

To save money and avoid duplication of services, NASA and the National Science Foundation have agreed to share network facilities.

The agreement, according to the two agencies, is in accord with a report released by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. The study, "A Research and Development Strategy for High Performance Computing," recommends improvements in networking to enhance US leadership in leading edge computing and to provide the linkages needed for collaborative research by scientists working at different institutions.

Three NASA facilities are linked to existing NSF regional networks, which in turn are connected through a national backbone network. The Goddard Space Flight Center, in Greenbelt, Md., is now linked to the Southeastern Universities Research Associates Net; the Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif., is linked to the Bay Area Regional Research Net; and the Johnson Space Flight Center, in Houston, Texas, has access to SESQUINET, a regional network in Texas.

Authorized scientists can remotely access and use NASA data in their research and can apply for time on NASA supercomputers. NASA-funded scientists at universities served by NSF regional networks can communicate and collaborate with their colleagues at the NASA centers.

"NSF and NASA have agreed to work together to identify ways to satisfy the technical requirements of networking through research, engineering and implementation," says Steve Wolff, NSF division director for networking and communications research and infrastructure. "We are acting on the report's recommendations, and expect to identify some cost-effective solutions to networking problems."

In addition to the agreement with NASA, the NSF also shares networking facilities with the Office of Naval Research Projects Agency.

Complete details are available from the National Science Foundation at 202/357-9498.

—John Edwards

Talking 'Traveler' Helps Handicapped

NASA's Ames Research Center has developed a compact speech synthesizer that could be a useful travel companion for people who are speech handicapped. Battery-powered and small enough to fit into a briefcase, the 20-pound unit is light enough to carry easily. At 5-inches high, it is small enough to store under an airline seat.

The synthesizer consists of a microcomputer, a synthesizer circuit, batteries, a charger, a power converter and a telephone amplifier. None of the components are expensive and all are available commercially.

The speech synthesizer can be used in face-to-face or telephone conversations. To use the unit, a person selects an appropriate text-to-speech program from the computer's menu. Statements are typed into the keyboard and stored in memory. When the Return key is pressed, stored statements are converted to audible speech. The computer also can be custom programmed, enabling common phrases or greetings to be activated by a single keystroke.

NASA is not producing the device for sale, but would like to find a commercial organization that would market it.

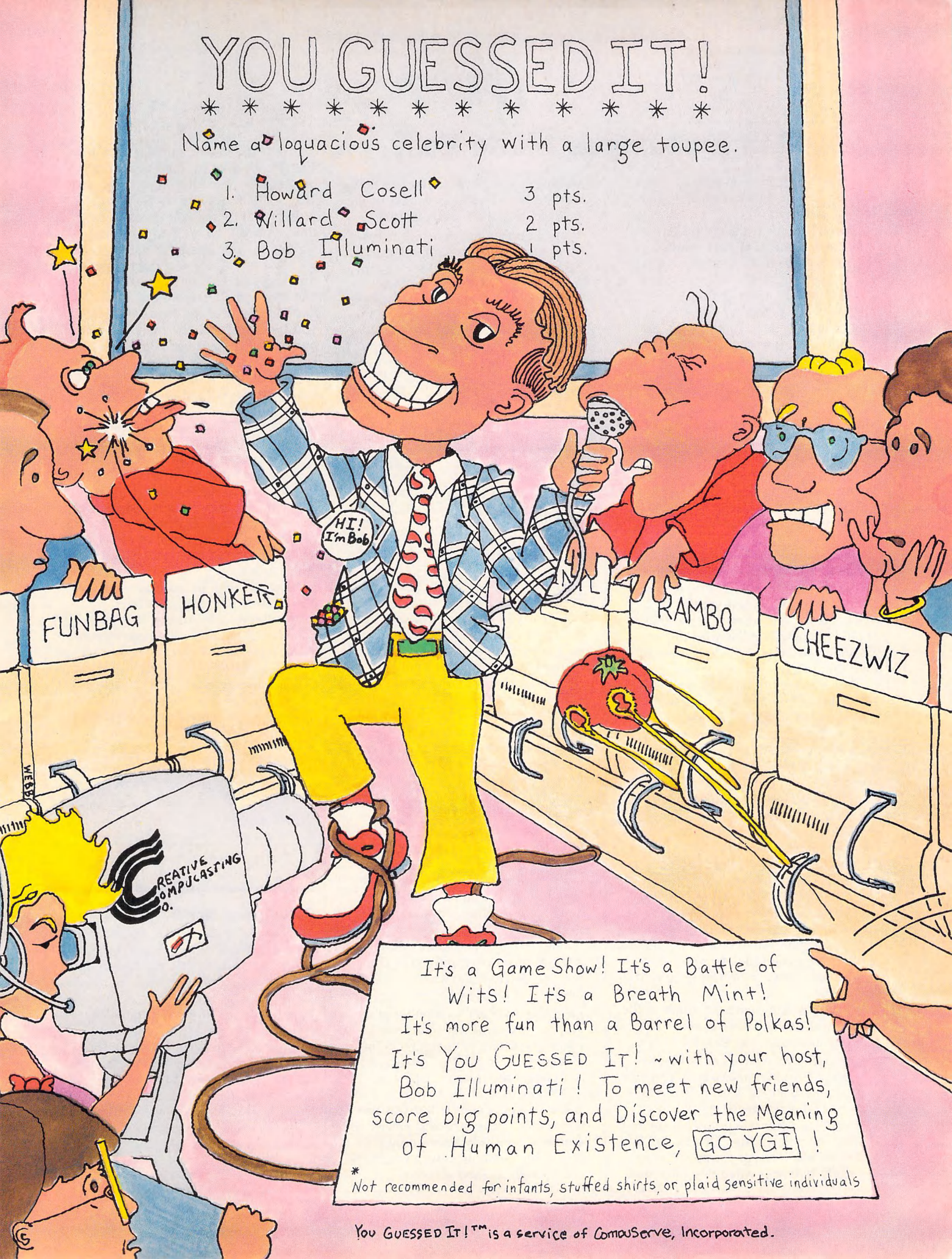
For more information, contact the Ames Center's Patent Counsel at 415/694-5104.

On CompuServe, subscribers can find disability resource information and support in the Handicapped Users' Database (GO HUD) and the Disabilities Forum (GO DISABILITIES).

Get Computer Industry News

Online Today Daily Edition's Monitor section keeps you abreast of the latest computer and information industry news. Stories are added several times each day and the hot items are highlighted on our front page, OLT-1. A week's worth of recent news is always available for review (OLT-20). To read today's news, type GO OLT-90 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

***MONITOR DAILY NEWS**	**OLT-160**
About Monitor	**OLT-359**
Behind the Screens	**OLT-130**
Calendar of Events	**OLT-1000**
Headlines	**OLT-1**
Recent News	**OLT-20**
Reporting News to Us	**OLT-352**
Special Reports	**OLT-2000**
Today's News	**OLT-90**


YOU GUESSED IT!
* * * * * * * * * * * * * *
Name a loquacious celebrity with a large toupee.
1. Howard Cosell 3 pts.
2. Willard Scott 2 pts.
3. Bob Illuminati 1 pts.
HI! I'm Bob
FUNBAG
HONKER
RAMBO
CHEEZWIZ
CREATIVE COMPULCASTING CO.
It's a Game Show! It's a Battle of Wits! It's a Breath Mint! It's more fun than a Barrel of Polkas! It's You Guessed It! ~with your host, Bob Illuminati! To meet new friends, score big points, and Discover the Meaning of Human Existence, GO YGI !
* Not recommended for infants, stuffed shirts, or plaid sensitive individuals
You Guessed It!™ is a service of Comuserve, Incorporated.

EasyPlex Exchanges Made Easy

If you're a new CompuServe subscriber, you ought to know that you have a new mailbox.

Electronic mail, the computer communications function that enables users to send private mail to other computer users, has attracted a lot of interest. In fact, electronic mail capability often lures users to computer networks.

Those using electronic mail today are on the leading edge of what may someday be the standard form of communication. Some futurists say that soon most written communications, both business and private, will take place electronically through computer networks. And why not? Electronic mail is fast, efficient and as secure as information sent first-class through the postal service. In fact, US courts have ruled that electronic mail is protected by the same privacy statutes as traditional mail.

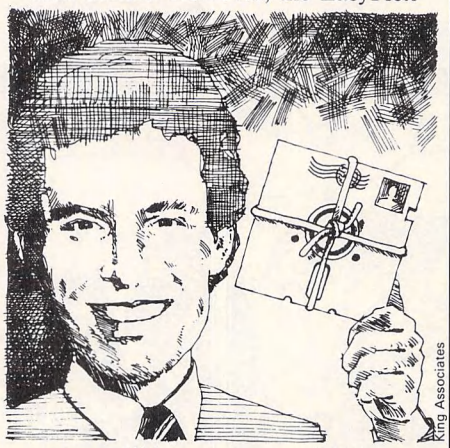
The future has already arrived on CompuServe with the ability to send electronic mail to the several hundred thousand people linked via the network. New CompuServe subscribers should become familiar with the way EasyPlex—CompuServe's version of electronic mail—works.

As with many CompuServe functions, EasyPlex messages can be sent and received from the menu that is displayed each time you enter the EasyPlex area, or, for more advanced users, the menus can be eliminated and mail can be sent and received from a command prompt to save connect time. To get to the EasyPlex area, type GO EASY, GO EASYPLEX or GO MAIL at any system prompt.

The first time a user enters the EasyPlex area, after a brief welcome message, he or she is offered information on sending and receiving EasyPlex messages. If you don't have written documentation for the EasyPlex program, it is a good idea to send this information to your printer or save it in a disk file.

As a new user, here are some of the basics you need to keep in mind when sending and receiving EasyPlex mail.

- CompuServe always alerts you to waiting EasyPlex messages. You can set the defaults at the Default menu to be taken automatically to the EasyPlex menu when you log on and when mail is waiting. Or you can set the defaults so that CompuServe merely tells you when you have mail waiting. In any event, you will never have to keep checking your EasyPlex mailbox to see if mail is waiting.
- When sending mail to other users, you must use their CompuServe User ID numbers. The EasyPlex system keeps track of all users by their CompuServe User ID numbers, not their names. However, the EasyPlex system will keep a personal address book for you in which you can list the names and User ID numbers of people with whom you communicate regularly. This way, you only have to remember names. For example, if you were to add Dave Peyton with the User ID number 76703,244 to the online address book, you do not have to remember my User ID number each time you send me mail. All you have to do is type my name at the "Send to:" prompt and the appropriate User ID number is inserted.


King Associates

- When reading mail, you'll see all the letters addressed to you on a menu that displays the message numbers, the sender and the subject of each message. You cannot accidentally lose a letter addressed to you without first reading it. If you try to delete an unread letter, the system will tell you it hasn't been read and ask if you want to delete it anyway.
- Not only can you send electronic messages to other CompuServe users, but also you can send to users of other electronic systems, including CompuServe's InfoPlex mail system, MCI Mail and to any TELEX or TWX machine in the world. It gives you messaging power that was unheard of 10 years ago and places you among a relatively select group of electronic communicators who have such power at their disposal.

You can become familiar with how EasyPlex works by sending a practice message to yourself. Simply type your User ID number at the "Send to:" prompt and, when you check in next time, you will be notified that mail is waiting in your EasyPlex mailbox.

After you become comfortable with the basics of sending and receiving electronic mail, explore the advanced options available through EasyPlex. If you type HELP at the main EasyPlex menu, you'll see a list of EasyPlex subtopics that offer specific help for special EasyPlex functions; many are both time-saving and money-saving. These instructions are always up to date and will give you the latest information about how to use the EasyPlex system more efficiently.

Whether you use EasyPlex to keep in touch with family and friends far away or as a means to communicate with business associates throughout the world, uses for this form of electronic messaging are limited only by your imagination.

Take the time to learn about EasyPlex and its many options for CompuServe subscribers. Remember, the experts say that this type of communication will probably become essential in tomorrow's world. Those who become comfortable with electronic messaging systems such as EasyPlex today can look ahead to when sending electronic messages is the norm.

David Peyton co-authored How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe *and* Advanced CompuServe for IBM PC Power Users. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,244.*

Coming Next Month

"Online With Charles Bowen" does not appear this month. Look for a new column, "How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe," co-authored by Charles Bowen and David Peyton, in next month's issue. You'll find the same reliable, step-by-step tips on using CompuServe that you've come to expect from the *How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe* Bantam Book series by these authors. Bowen and Peyton answer questions, address comments and offer advice about using CompuServe more efficiently.

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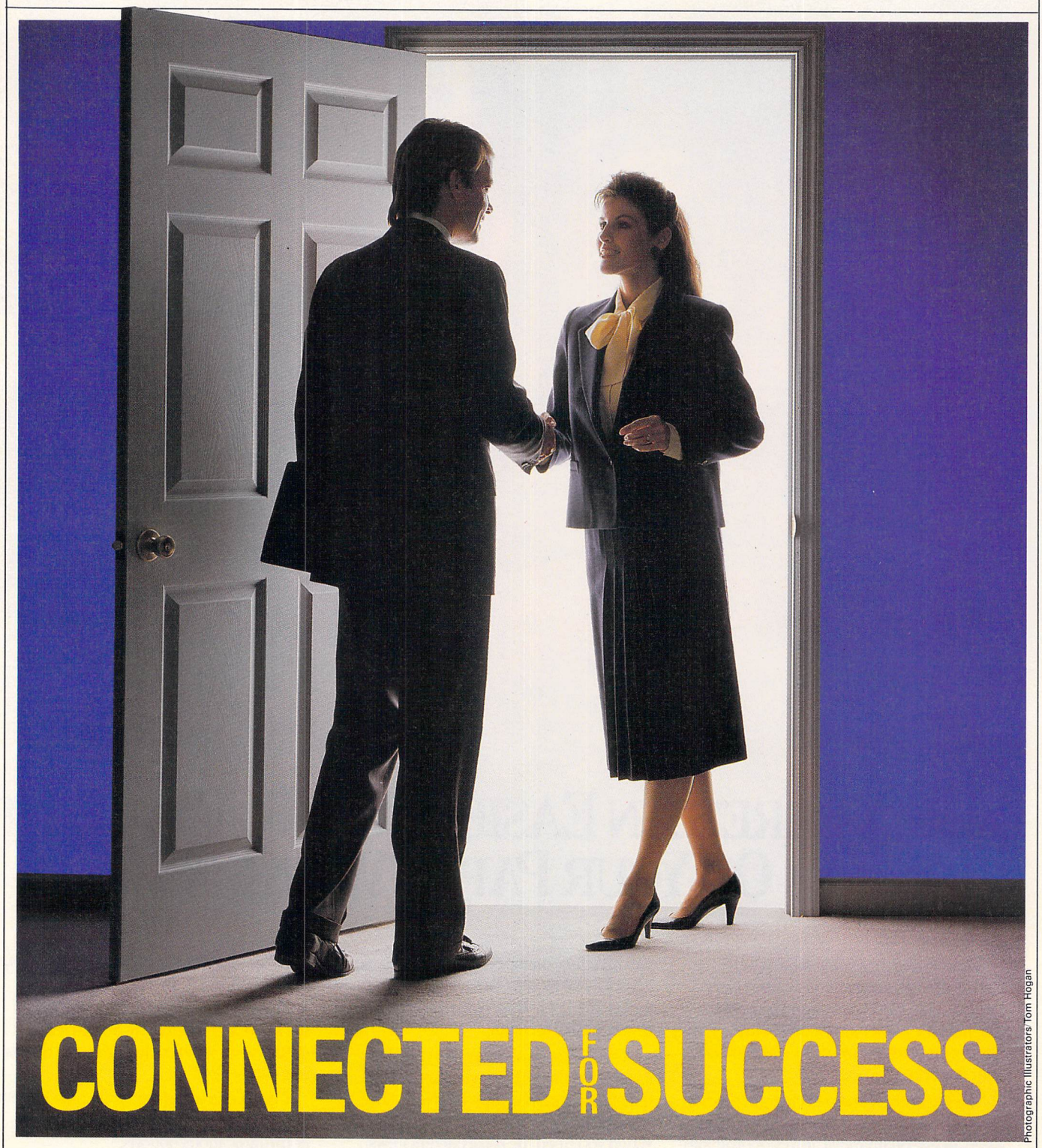


CONNECTED FOR SUCCESS

Photographic Illustrators/Tom Hogan

by Holly G. Miller

For students "getting started in the business" or pros breaking out of a rut, CompuServe's forums can help them get a foot in the door or make strides toward the executive suite. Career development, job advancement, and professional mentoring and mingling are either primary goals or important by-products of several forums geared to specific fields. Whatever the profession, members share a common objective: the urge to get ahead.

A lot of college students stop by the Legal Forum and the Public Relations and Marketing Forum looking for advice on which classes would be most useful later on. Some are interested in summer internships; others want to

know about job opportunities. A couple of the forums have areas where members can leave resumes or notes about themselves and their skills.

One such forum with space set aside for possible employer/employee matchmaking is the Computer Training Forum (GO DPTRAIN), where "help wanted" messages far outnumber "position sought" notices. Recent postings by a large New York City advertising agency and a major airline are typical of the burgeoning field that DPTRAIN Forum Administrator Elliott Masie calls "wide open." Still, Masie initially was surprised at the amount of recruitment activity online.

"I didn't expect this would happen," he admits. "We've got companies looking for experienced computer trainers, and we have free-lancers swapping ideas and contacts. To accommodate them, we decided to dedicate a section to them."

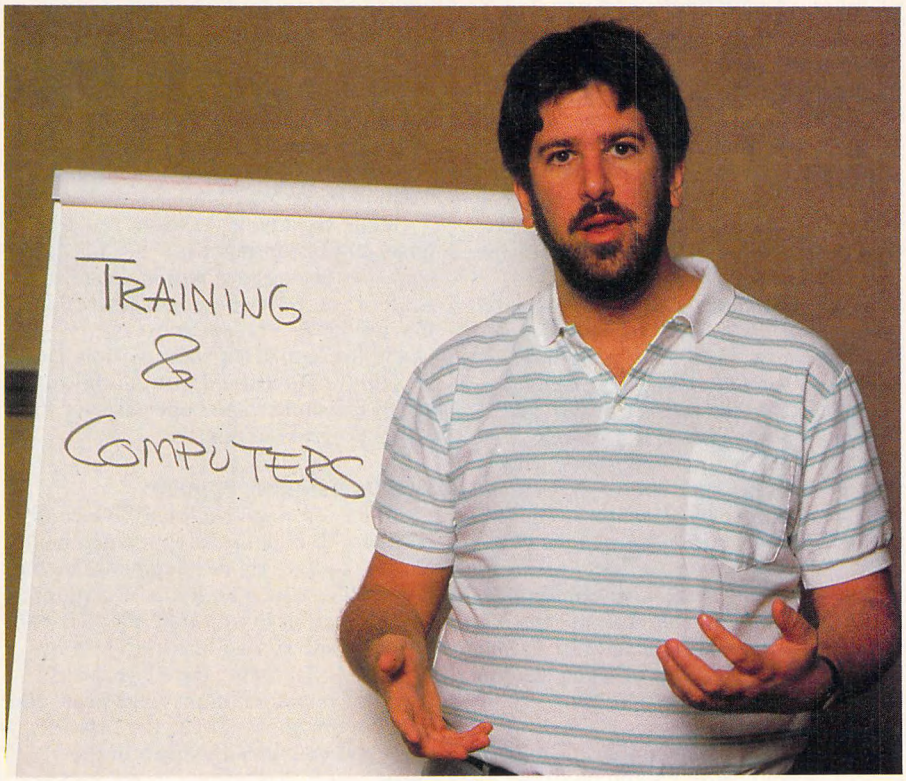
Although the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication has a similar online job bank, news of career opportunities often spills over onto the message board and continues more privately via EasyPlex.

"That's when it comes down to, 'We are interviewing so-and-so from your university who will be graduating soon. Can you tell me about her?' " explains AEJMC Forum Administrator Lucinda Davenport, a member of the faculty at Michigan State University. "That's a typical message about an undergraduate or graduate student in all areas of journalism. Often, professionals help each other switch jobs, too. Recently we had two people who changed positions just by talking online about opportunities. One had the job opening; the other needed a job."

Such electronic employment "courtships" save time and money. Positions are filled quickly without the hassle and expense of placing advertisements in professional journals that are published monthly or even quarterly.

"I just put up a job notice for a grants reviewer for the International Education Division of the United States Department of Education," says Jerry Ervin, administrator of the Foreign Language Education Forum (GO FLEFO). "Because of the short time period from issue to closing date—about one month—that notice will never be seen by people who rely on print media for their information."

The "help wanted" section of FLEFO is equally valuable to free-lancers in search of short-term assignments. Tom Sponheim, who is fluent in German, recalls that when he quit his full-time job more than a year ago, he logged onto the Foreign Language Education Forum to check for free-lance opportunities. He quickly made contact with a translation bureau looking for someone to do translations for German computer companies. Since all data transactions were to be made electronically, the location of the translator wasn't important. Assignments continued even though Sponheim relocated to Seattle.



Encouraging employer/employee exchanges: *Masie*

"By having this circle of translator friends around the world, I'm able to get quick help on difficult sections of translations," says Tom.

Sometimes a job posting carries an element of surprise. Forum participants assume that the people they're communicating with are located out of town, most likely out of state, and even out of the country. Not always, says Martin Schiff, an active member of the Computer Consultants' Forum (GO CONSULT). He once responded to a "help wanted" request for a programmer and did a doubletake when the reply put him in touch with a businessman in his home community of Winter Park, Fla. A local call was placed, a quick face-to-face meeting was arranged, and a lucrative assignment resulted.

Shop Talk

While online professional forums are friendly, and guests are always welcome, few outsiders stay for long. Shop talk dominates, professional jargon is the accepted tongue, and interests are tightly focused.

"The market we serve is not the average users," says Elliott Masie, whose DPTRAIN is sponsored by the National Training and Computers Project at Sagamore Institute in New York. "Occasionally a person comes on because of the name of the forum (Computer Training Forum) and leaves a message that asks, 'How do I work my Apple?' We welcome him in, explain our forum and let him know that he can type GO MAUG and be with lots of Apple-talking friends. About 98 percent leave and we never see them again. That's fine as far as we're concerned, because when a company executive logs on, we'd rather have him experience professional computer trainers than see a lot of other activity."

Often a visitor needs only to check the bulletin board to realize he's wandered into a specialized area. For instance, trying to follow a message thread in FLEFO makes a guest feel like a bewildered Eliza Doolittle trailing behind Henry Higgins. It's all Greek—

or Spanish, or Portuguese, or French or Esperanto (an artificial international language based on the major European languages). Forum members debate the roots of words, argue the best translation of obscure phrases and occasionally lapse into foreign dialogues.

"I can put up a list of problem terms in German or Russian and give some background about the field or the context in which the terms are used," explains Ben Teague, a translator based in Athens, Ga. "Other translators working in that language can either offer equivalents or suggest places I should look. This kind of discussion has always gone on at translators' conferences, and my colleagues working in big cities have been able to consult one another by telephone. Those of us far away from the commercial centers had to spend lots of long-distance money or wait for the next conference. One solution is undesirable and the other is usually impossible. FLEFO has changed that; now I'm on equal footing with translators in New York."

State-of-the-Art Graphics

If foreign terms and computerese are confusing to the outsider, the addition of graphics doesn't help. In the black bag network of the Medical Forum (GO MEDSIG), physicians communicate with words and pictures. The result is mystifying to passersby and exhilarating to the physicians who frequent the forum.

"This is our most visible state-of-the-art activity," says Medical Forum Administrator Alan Rowberg. "Dr. Steve Reid uploads a 'case of the month' with a clinical description of the problem and tabular information, such as laboratory data. He also uploads the patient's CT scan in GIF format. This may be viewed at varying brightnesses and results in a useful series of renditions of these images, which initially contain 256 shades of gray in each image. Other physicians then ask questions about the case and discuss the diagnostic process."

While the Medical Forum seldom hosts large conferences, it occasionally sponsors discussions within specific subtopic areas of the message section. For example, a recent guest in the newly formed AIDS subtopic was Dr. H. Hunter Handsfield, a well-known AIDS researcher and supervisor of the AIDS program in Seattle.

Live Conferences Popular

Other forums have found live conferences to be popular ways to keep members up to date on developments within their profession. The Public Relations and Marketing Forum (GO PRSIG) has been the site of two historic visits by Edward L. Bernays, the 92-year-old father of public relations who wrote the first PR textbook, taught the first PR class and convinced women in the 1920s that it was stylish to smoke (he's since apologized). Another PR pioneer to visit the forum was Harold Burson, founder of one of the world's largest public relations companies, Burson-Marsteller.

"We've had representatives of the PR agency that worked with Max Headroom join us online to review that program," recalls Forum Administrator Ron Solberg. "Also, Chester Burger, a former national president of the Public Relations Society of America 'spoke' to us about time management and public relations; and Tom Harris, a Chicago PR notable, shared thoughts on marketing and public relations."

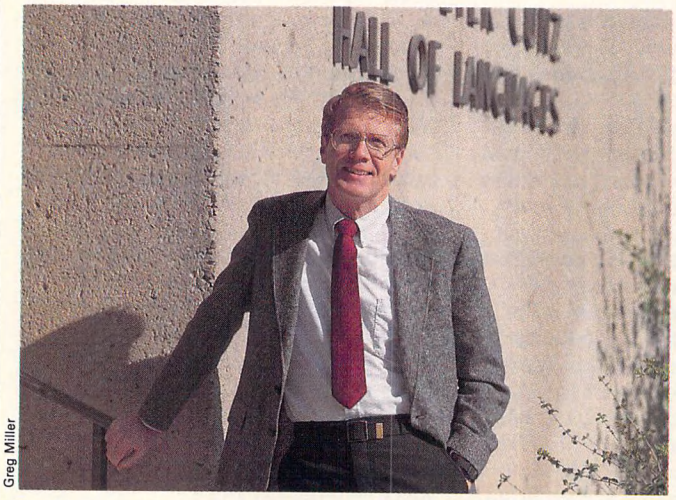
In the ever-evolving field of professional photography, live conferences are an effective way of keeping up with technology. The Photography Forum (GO PHOTOFORUM) not only is quick to announce new products and processes, but it also likes to pull in the developers behind the innovations. When Kodak introduced a new black-and-white film (it still doesn't have a name), forum members had the chance to question the company's development manager and technical associate. Another popular session featured a panel of TV film experts, including the director of photography for the TV series, "Private Practice."

"Everyone who visits the Photo Forum regularly goes away with a heightened awareness of what is happening in the industry," says Forum Administrator Mike Wilmer. "It is unlikely that anything newsworthy will go unnoticed. Whoever hears or reads something new will always share it with the membership."

Tapping Online Resources

Such information is promptly filed in the data libraries for future access. Newsletters are uploaded, notes from professional meetings and conferences are recorded, and research is stored in the hope that it will ease the workload of colleagues.

"A client who deals in chemical emergencies once asked me to write several speeches on crisis communications," recalls PR counselor David Shank. "In my research I turned to the data library in PRSIG and found a wealth of background information on

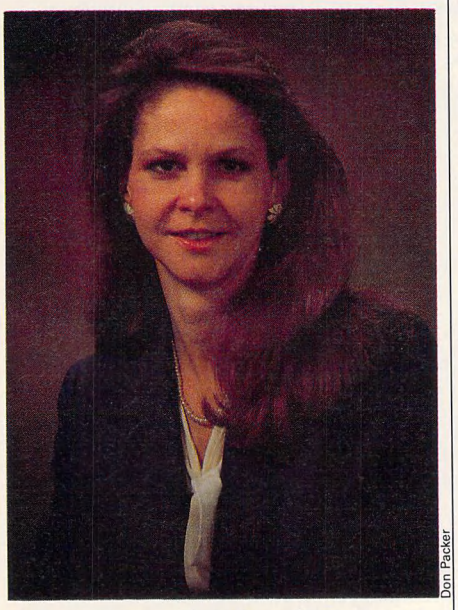


Greg Miller

Banking on job bank: *Ervin*

Catharine Reeve

Keeping current at conferences: *Solberg*



Don Packer

Online opportunities abound: *Davenport*

the topic. It saved me hours in a 'paper library.' Also, I knew that if I wanted to verify or expand the material, I could get access to the original researcher on CompuServe."

Just as the libraries are valuable resources to tap, so are the members who created and stored the files. As working professionals, they are plugged into their industries and can speak from firsthand experience.

Marc Rettig, a member of the Computer Consultants' Forum (GO CONSULT), is so convinced of the online expertise available in the forum that he plans to upload a demo of his company's new software product in the hope that his peers will offer their honest reactions. Even if it is negative, he knows constructive criticism will accompany the feedback and will help in further development. If the peer reviews are positive, he'll be convinced he has a winner.

"Though opinionated, I find that the denizens of the Computer Consultants' Forum are friendly," says Theresa Carey. "Some will go out of their way to help you. I use the forum extensively to solve some of the strange problems that people have with computers. A less tangible benefit is the camaraderie that exists among the regulars. Most of us are independents, working alone or with a small group. Having these online friends who understand the problems and joys of running a business is wonderful."

The forums continue to give a professional boost to seasoned members regardless of their years in the field. Carey is a veteran, but her thoughts are shared by newcomers as well.

"The Computer Consultants' Forum is indispensable," says David Frier. "I go there with questions of my own or I lurk on threads originated by others. The real-world problems that come up, along with the common sense solutions, usually proposed by the resident gurus, have prevented me from making more than one serious mistake. I've had to have a 'crash course' in marketing, client relations, contract negotiations—all the things that a contract programmer never has to worry about, but that a true consultant must. Without the Computer Consultants' Forum and the amazing group that populates and operates it, I'd have been out in the cold."

If the forums help individuals grow within a profession, the profession also grows as members build on each other's research and experience. For example:

- Educators in AEJMC swap teaching techniques, compare course outlines and evaluate articles before publication. Students, flushed with excitement from covering their first big story, upload it for constructive criticism before submitting it to their campus newspaper. The education process, no longer limited to a 50-minute class period, continues around the clock.
- Broadcasters whose odd-hour shifts prevent them from networking face to face find they don't have to put their professional development on hold because of the clock or their schedules. They can log onto the Broadcast Professionals Forum (GO BPFORUM), check the classified list of job postings, catch up with news from the Audio Engineering Society and join in a message discussion with John Reiser, a forum administrator who works for the Federal Communications Commission.
- Photographers can expand their lists of clients by uploading a PRO-FILE that details their credits, areas of expertise and their geographic location.
- Doctors, aware that computers could streamline their practices but with no time to research options and features, depend on the online presence of *Computer News for Physicians,* a journal that participates regularly in the Medical Forum.
- A Tokyo translator, struggling with British budget terms, knows he can post a plea for help and have an answer within hours.
- A young computer programmer, anxious to expand his career into consulting, finds advice, role models and mentors just keystrokes away.

"The electronic company of others who have made a few more steps along the road than I have is very reassuring," says David Frier, programmer-turned-consultant. "I can look at these folks and know for a fact that my goals are attainable, because these people have done it."

Holly G. Miller, a free-lance writer and college professor based in Anderson, Ind., is a contributing editor of The Saturday Evening Post *and* Indianapolis *magazine. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2345.*

Make Connections in Professional Forums

Here are a few of the online forums where professionals meet and exchange information. For information about forums not listed here, type FIND FORUMS at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

GO AEJMC	Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Comm.
GO BPFORUM	Broadcast Professionals Forum
GO CONSULT	Computer Consultants Forum
GO DPTRAIN	Computer Training Forum
GO EDFORUM	Education Forum
GO FLEFO	Foreign Language Education Forum
GO JFORUM	Journalism Forum
GO LAWSIG	Legal Forum
GO MEDSIG	AAMSI Medical Forum
GO PHOTOFORUM	Photography Forum
GO PRSIG	Public Relations and Marketing Forum
GO SAFETYNET	SafetyNet
GO SCIENCE	Science/Math Education Forum
GO SPACEED	Space Education Forum
GO USEN	International Entrepreneurs' Network
GO WORK	Working From Home Forum

Breeding Success

Entrepreneurs' Network Turns Big Dreams into Business Plans

Bruce Kullberg is a man with know-how and "know-who." As forum administrator of the International Entrepreneurs' Network (GO USEN), he helps turn dreams into schemes that succeed and grow.

"Being an entrepreneur can be a lonely business," says Kullberg. "Entrepreneurs' spouses often work 9 to 5 for somebody else and don't understand why their mates put in 16-hour days, want to mortgage their houses and risk everything they've spent years building. Sometimes it helps to tap into other people who have been there and know what it's like."

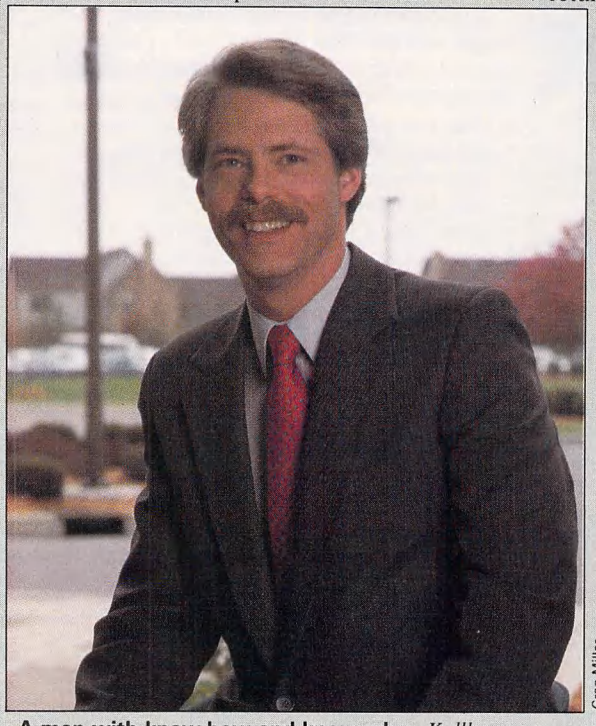
The Entrepreneurs' Network—celebrating its third year online this month—is the place that offers comfort, advice and model business plans. Success stories are numerous, although Kullberg says entrepreneurs typically are fast-moving "doers" who log on for problem-solving more than for socializing. They take their solutions and run ... probably back to their drawing boards for application. Snippets of thanks are later posted in the message area, and Kullberg has a fat file of testimonials that have been mailed to his office at the Entrepreneurship Institute in Columbus, Ohio, the forum's sponsoring organization. A favorite note tacked to his wall oozes with gratitude:

"I owe you and the network thanks for the great business plan template," it says. "It cut the formulation time for birthing this particular baby by months, plus earning me a ration of praise from my Stanford MBA mentor."

The network is especially helpful to persons who can't find advice close to home. Local people with lots of expertise often are competitors vying for the same customers. Don't count on them to boost your success, counsels Kullberg.

"The forum allows you to talk with people in similar types of businesses on a non-competitive basis," he says. "Whereas members of a networking group in Ohio might not want to trade secrets, they're willing to open up and share ideas with someone from California because there is no fear that one will take clients from the other."

Although the forum was launched as the United States Entrepreneurs' Network, it assumed its international tag when members began logging on from Japan, Germany, France and Italy. Recently, an entrepreneur introduced himself on the message board as a specialist who helps people set up businesses in Australia. Within 24 hours, a reply came from a member anxious to expand Down Under.



Greg Miller

A man with know-how and know-who: *Kullberg*

"When I first started the forum in 1985, I answered everything myself," admits Kullberg. "Consequently, no one else corresponded. I stopped, because I wanted the members to feel ownership. It's *our* forum, not mine, not the Entrepreneurship Institute's, but ours. Now in our online conferences we have people brainstorming, solving problems and making contacts. You put six people together and generally someone has the answer to any problem you present."

Often the "problem" amounts to little more than chronic cold feet. A Vermont woman who spent years dreaming about starting a business logged onto the forum several months ago, learned how to raise financing, heard about the pitfalls to avoid and was given the charge to "go get 'em." She did.

"It's just a decision away," says Kullberg. If that same woman had gotten online and had been told, 'No, you shouldn't take a chance; keep your job, keep your security,' she never would have done it. Instead, people said, 'Yes, you can do it. We believe in you'."

In its early days, the forum drew persons mainly involved in computer-related businesses. Current members are a broader mix. Manufacturers, retailers and persons owning franchises find help in marketing, managing, economic development, sales and international trade. A monthly newsletter gleans and passes on tidbits from speeches, workshops and other publications. All activities are geared to helping the entrepreneur save time, prevent mistakes, keep up and push ahead.

"I download the newsletter every month," says David Rowe, publisher of a trade magazine for video retailers. "A recent article was about business ethics, a tough topic to tackle since it is only now being taught in business schools. It shed a lot of light on a crucial subject."

Just as the forum advocates networking among members, it practices what it teaches and pools efforts with other forums. In March, the Entrepreneurs' Network joined with the Public Relations and Marketing Forum (GO PRSIG) for a conference with Jerry McAfee, vice president and director of marketing for Microbase Software. "You have to surround yourself with people you want to be like," says Kullberg, who was involved in two small businesses before he joined the Entrepreneurship Institute. "You have to get in touch with people who know how to help you. As one of our members says, if you access people who are on the same level as you are, the information is only as good as what you already have. If you want to be more successful, you have to interact with people who are what you want to be. It is a basic principle and it is the key to success. Our forum helps you do it."

—HGM

Office Interaction—Inside Your Home

by Camille Ohlson

David Session

Uniting telecommuters via online interaction: *The Edwardses*

Telecommuting. It is a word you probably will find only in the very latest dictionaries, but it has been the dream of futurists for years. But futurist thinkers forgot one detail: Those solitary home-workers miss the social interaction a community of workers enjoys. CompuServe's Working From Home Forum (GO WORK) provides that interaction.

"One of the things people experience from working at home is a feeling of isolation," says Forum Administrator Paul Edwards. "They can't lean over and ask a question, share a victory or commiserate with someone in the next office."

Edwards says the forum provides the opportunity for the interaction an office, building or community has, minus the face-to-face contact. Using the forum message board, members trade information, get help, and develop customer and referral sources.

Many people who join the forum are looking for information and tips on how to start their own at-home businesses. Forum Library 2 is the place to look for an answer.

A regularly updated file called IDEAS.BIZ contains hundreds of ideas for businesses. A companion file, START.BIZ, contains a thorough checklist of questions developed by Edwards, designed to help those interested in starting their own businesses.

Edwards has the expertise and credentials to develop that checklist. He was a member of the Board of Governors of his local Young Lawyers Association when a senior lawyer in town asked Edwards if he enjoyed what he was doing.

"My response must have been ambiguous because he probed more deeply. I told him what I really loved doing was being more involved in public affairs." The senior lawyer then told Edwards that if he had the chance to do it all over again, he would not practice law.

"Over the next few months I thought about that and decided that I didn't want to be in my fifties someday, telling some young lawyer that 'if I had the chance to do it all over again, I'd do something else'."

So Edwards closed his practice and has since worked in intergovernmental relations, headed a research foundation, served as a political consultant and now works as a business consultant in Los Angeles.

Edwards and his wife, Sarah, were writing the first edition of *Working From Home* when they heard of the forums on CompuServe. Edwards thought that "working from home" was a natural for a forum, so he contacted CompuServe, and the Working From Home Forum was online within six months.

"Our book, *Working From Home,* has benefited from the forum," says Paul Edwards. "Many of the anecdotes and examples are drawn from the people we've met on the forum."

While a book can go into more depth than the forum message board, the forum has the advantage of timeliness. Edwards says the file IDEAS.BIZ is updated about every three months, while new editions of their book come out far less frequently.

Assistant Forum Administrator John H. Everett provides an example of how one can work from home no matter where home is. In 1982 Everett was finishing his job as executive director of a Texas arts council and decided to start working for himself. "Trying to do things right, I attended some Small Business Administration workshops and visited with a member of the SBA SCORE program.

"One of the questions I had for the SCORE volunteer was, 'Should I have an office?' His answer will stay with me forever: 'Can you afford one?'."

Everett started working from home and now can't envision doing anything else. He works late some days, dresses casually and never forgets important documents at the office.

With the help of laptop computers, Everett and his wife are engaged in what Everett calls an experiment in taking the idea of working from home one step further.

"When we realized we could do our work from anyplace, we started thinking about where we would most like to live," he says.

Not surprisingly, the Everetts came up with a long list. But rather than pick just one place from their list, they decided to try them all. After six months in Astoria, Ore., the Everetts moved to Holualoa, Hawaii. Soon they will be moving back to Astoria to decide on a new temporary home.

Everett's experience in writing *The Information Broker's Handbook* illustrates the use of a forum and telecommunications as tools for work. Everett and co-author Libbi Crowe worked from their homes when they wrote the book. In fact, to this day they have never met face-to-face.

"I first thought of writing the book in response to a notice on the Working From Home Forum from J. Norman Goode of Ferret Press. He asked if anyone was interested in writing such a book.

"I suggested to Libbi we might work together to write the book. We worked out our contract in the conference section of the forum."

The book was written using CompuServe and the Working From Home Forum to exchange drafts, gather for an author's conference, share miseries and joys. "Without the Working From Home Forum, we could not have written the book together," he says.

You may not get a book offer if you join the Working From Home Forum, but it is the place to go if you are interested in making money with your computer or working from home.

To join the forum, type GO WORK at any CompuServe prompt.

Camille Ohlson is a free-lance writer based in San Diego. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,3340.

Timely and Affordable

NewsGrid Searches Current Developments

by Cathryn Conroy

It wasn't too long ago that many people got their morning news by standing at the kitchen counter gulping coffee and flipping through the paper before that mad dash out of the house. Online news services have changed that, offering unique opportunities to quickly and efficiently read current news stories that may impact your personal and business lives.

One of the most recent services to appear on CompuServe is NewsGrid, a resource offering articles culled from such international sources as Agence France Presse (France), Deutsche Presse-Agentur (West Germany), Kyodo (Japan) and Xinhua (China) as well as the Associated Press, United Press International and PR Newswire.

The depth and scope of news offered by NewsGrid is matched only by its timeliness, ease of use and affordability. NewsGrid editors work from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m., updating stories continuously. In fact, an average of one new story or update is published online every two minutes, with the latest article automatically replacing an earlier one on the same topic, so you are assured of reading the most current developments.

NewsGrid is not only easy to use, but it is also efficient. Articles are filed in five areas: US/World Headline News, US Business Headline News, World Business Headline News, Market Update and Keyword Search. The headlines offer the chance to quickly scan the most important stories of the moment. By just reading the headlines, you'll get a feel for what is happening: B.F. Goodrich triples its earnings, union workers at General Electric's midwest plants plan to strike, Japan plans to import more electronics from Asia. Reading the full story is a simple matter of selecting the proper menu number.

Market Update is ideal for the serious business user or investor who wants to know important economic statistics minutes after they are officially released by the Department of Commerce, or the latest fluctuations in the stock market. Market Update offers fast-breaking information from the New York Stock Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, over-the-counter prices as well as figures and statistics on bonds, currencies, commodities and the government's economic indicators. Market Update stories are issued on a regular, predictable basis so subscribers know when to expect and where to find the reports they want.

But the best part of NewsGrid is the search mechanism you can use to locate stories of interest. Every article NewsGrid publishes contains a list of keywords the editors assign to it, based on the text of the story before it is posted online. Many of the keywords are published (you can get a list of them under "How to use NewsGrid" on the first menu) so there is little guessing, removing the hit-and-miss approach of many search databases.

Two keyword listings are published: geographical and industrial (there are more than 50, including forestry products, biotechnology and health care). The NewsGrid editors use these keywords when assigning an article's search string; for instance, in a story about the Soviet Union, they will *always* identify it with "USSR" so you don't have to worry about typing multiple keywords (such as USSR, Soviet Union and Russia) to get the stories you want.

But the search process doesn't end here. You can search stories by company name or ticker symbol as well as by an individual's proper name (these lists are not published). In addition, NewsGrid performs a "begins with" search whereby all words that begin with the keyed-in letters are used. For example, "auto" will search auto, autos, automobile and automotive. "Abbott" will search Abbott Labs and Abbott Laboratories. Users don't have to guess what version of a word NewsGrid used.

NewsGrid will indicate that it is performing the "begins with" search by appending an asterisk to the word it is searching on. To instruct NewsGrid to do an exact word search (not a "begins with" search), end your search term with an exclamation point.

With the keyword search, you can quite efficiently study broadbased areas, such as the presidential election, or narrow your search to just one candidate. Investors can closely monitor the stock market in just a matter of seconds, and those in business can keep a close eye on their industries as well as the actions of competition. One of NewsGrid's greatest strengths is its comprehensive international coverage, allowing users to keep abreast of economic and news developments in other countries.

One more important point: NewsGrid—with all of its sophisticated search capabilities and international news coverage—contains *no* surcharges. The only fees you pay are for connect time.

For more information, type GO NEWSGRID.

Cathryn Conroy is a contributing editor of Online Today. *Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,417.*

Searching Industry News

Here's a list of the industry keywords that NewsGrid searches on:

Accounting
Advertising
Aerospace
Agriculture
Appliances
Autos
Aviation

Banking
Beverages
Biotechnology
Business Services

Chemicals
Computers
Construction
Consumer Products
Containers

Defense Contracting

Educational Services
Electronic Publishing

Electronics
Entertainment
Environmental Services

Financial Services
Food
Forestry Products
Funeral Services

Health Care

Industrial Products
Insurance

Law

Machinery
Media
Metals
Mining

Nuclear Energy

Office Equipment

Petroleum Products
Pharmaceuticals
Plastics

Railroads
Real Estate
Restaurants
Retail
Rubber

Ship Building
Shipping

Telecommunications
Textiles
Tobacco
Travel Services
Trucking

Utilities

Waste Management

Hot on the Campaign Trail

by Randy Rendfeld

When George Bush said "ya'll" in a speech to South Carolinians, it was noted in the Campaign Hotline's National Briefing (GO HOTLINE).

When Pat Robertson privately told aides that God's position on the role of the clergy and politics had changed and that his eventual victory is divine providence, it was noted in the National Briefing.

When 30 percent of the New Hampshire voters said they'd vote for non-candidate Mario Cuomo for president, it was reported in the Hotline's Poll Update.

And when Vice President Bush and Dan Rather exchanged verbal fisticuffs on the "CBS Evening News," the Hotline posted comments from nine other candidates, bipartisan analyses from insiders, and reports compiled from national and regional media, in an effort to interpret the impact of the war of words on the race for the presidency.

It is a quickly paced, complex, information-age campaign, according to Jeffrey J. Hallett, co-publisher of the *Presidential Campaign Hotline*, an information service of the American Political Network that reports and analyzes such events, and that CompuServe subscribers now can access.

Some media insiders have called the Campaign Hotline the bible of US political information, Hallett says. "It is to political junkies what cocaine is to drug addicts, and what aerobics is to Jane Fonda," says Hallett.

CompuServe subscribers can tap into the same updates supplied and used daily by campaign staffs, the White House, major corporations, political action groups and such media as ABC, CBS, NBC, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. They can read schedules and reports of candidates' views, which are posted as they're received directly from campaign staffs. CompuServe's Campaign Hotline is updated each day at 6 p.m.

After typing GO HOTLINE, a subscriber will be prompted to select one of six Hotline features: National Briefing; Campaign Reports; Poll Update; Insider Commentary; Campaign Schedules; and Senate Race Briefings, as the Hotline is also tracking races for US Senate seats. A surcharge of $15 per hour in addition to regular CompuServe rates will be assessed.

Rick Buettner

Hooked on Campaign Hotline: *Hallett interprets implications*

The Hotline "doesn't just report on a story. It analyzes it," says Carrie Ford, CompuServe product manager. "It lets us see a different perspective. The media may tell you what it thinks is important, or it may give you only the headline or part of the story." Not only does the Hotline analyze the major campaign stories, but it sorts and reports minor stories for which newspapers and broadcast media may not have time or space.

"It has become the single most dependable source of inside information," Hallett says of the service, which was created last year.

On a day-to-day basis, the decisions within campaigns are made the same way they've been made for 60 or 70 years. What's changed is the speed with which any event becomes known.

"We get so much information that we are able to keep it as tightly focused on the campaign as possible. Over one weekend, just in electronic feeds, we got 450 pages of campaign articles in the process of being published in one of 20 to 25 local and regional newspapers."

Hallett says the Hotline staff learns of such things as leaks, campaign staff changes and predictions, and outrageous statements made at press conferences at the earliest possible time. When a story breaks on the political scene, the Hotline's contributing analysts, political consultants and pollsters from Republican and Democratic camps get on the phones and sort through reports to interpret the implications.

"The Hotline is absolutely bipartisan and is very comprehensive," says Hallett. "It is not just the perspective of a single newspaper. This is a complex, complicated and unpredictable campaign, and it's going to stay that way."

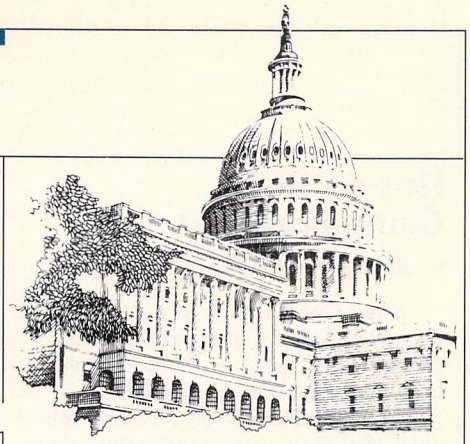
The Hotline will have an active presence at the conventions, Hallett says, and after the November elections, it will monitor the Reagan Administration's transition out of the White House and the president-elect's move into power.

Let Congress Know What You Think

Writing to lawmakers in Washington, D.C., can be as easy and quick as typing and sending an EasyPlex message.

CONGRESSgrams, hard-copy messages CompuServe subscribers compose in EasyPlex (GO EASY), can be written to members of the US Senate and US House of Representatives and delivered the next business day.

"It makes things easier," says Robert Foss, Florida Association of Broadcasters executive director. "We've got a small staff. And when I get a telegram or notice from our national office, I can send a message to



any number of lawmakers in 15 minutes. Rather than mail-merging a batch of letters, it is faster to put one message in and fire it off to all the pertinent committee members," he says.

CONGRESSgrams can be selected as an option from the EasyPlex menu. It is also an option on the FCC Proposal Information menu (GO FCC). The feature began as an efficient way for subscribers to protest carrier-access fees proposed by the Federal Communications Commission. Foss says he has used CONGRESSgrams to voice opinions on the FCC access-charge proposal, the fairness doctrine, the Florida lottery and other issues.

After selecting the option, a subscriber will be prompted for the name of the lawmaker who is to receive it and whether that lawmaker is a senator or representative.

"The subscriber doesn't have to know the Washington addresses," says Cheryl Martin, CompuServe product manager. "If a subscriber doesn't know the names of the area's senators or representative, he or she can access the Members of Congress directory (GO FCC-6), which is searchable by state and territories, such as the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico."

A CONGRESSgram up to 88 lines long and 69 characters wide can be composed online or uploaded. Or a message from the subscriber's Personal File Area can be used.

A CONGRESSgram is processed on plain white paper with an impact printer. It bears the recipient's name with the preface "Dear Honorable," followed by the text. It ends with "Sincerely," the subscriber's name, address and CompuServe User ID number.

The subscriber can send the same CONGRESSgram to other lawmakers from the EasyPlex workspace. "You have to type the letter and your name and address once. Then you'll be prompted for the senators' or representatives' names," Martin says.

There is a $1 surcharge for each CONGRESSgram to cover postage, printing, paper and envelopes.

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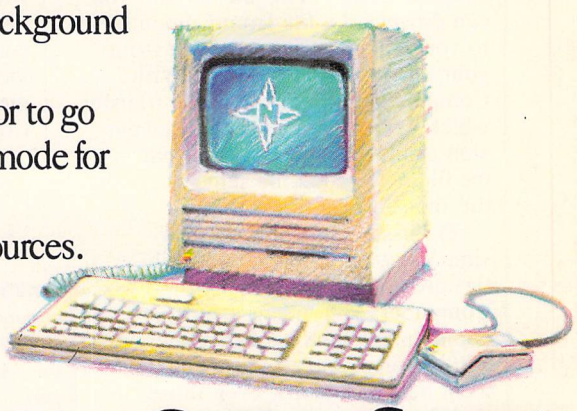

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Professional Connection

Explore Features and Capabilities of Version 3

by Tom Rauch

You have a microcomputer, a modem and a subscription to CompuServe. What else do you need to make your move to "Micropolis"? Communications software. This software is essential, because your microcomputer starts out as a stand-alone device, capable of all kinds of independent computations, but not designed to act in concert with other computers.

If your micro is an IBM PC or compatible, CompuServe's Professional Connection version 3 can handle your communications software needs. For other types of micros, consider CompuServe's VIDTEX line. Professional Connection version 3, the third major release of Professional Connection software, is a full-featured communications package. This means that it does more than communicate, although most of its other capabilities are designed to make communications easier and more productive.

For example, Professional Connection version 3 supports three graphics standards: Run Length Encoded (RLE), North American Presentation Level Protocol Syntax (NAPLPS) and CompuServe's own Graphics Interchange Format (GIF).

Professional Connection version 3 supports file transfer and interactive communication. This means that you can download a file from CompuServe to your micro, or upload a file from your micro to CompuServe. With CompuServe's B Protocol file transfer, which detects and corrects transmission errors, you can be sure that the file received is the same as the file sent.

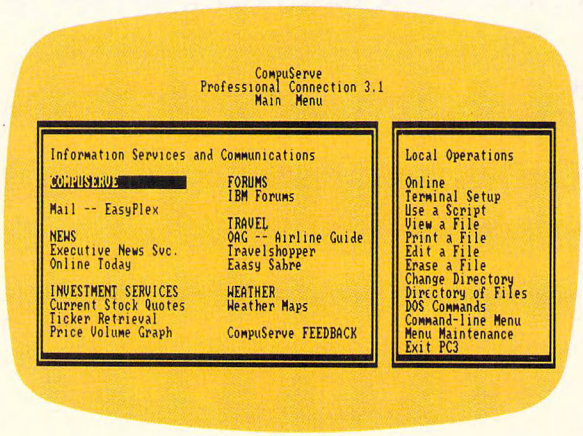
Professional Connection version 3's communication capabilities are not limited to CompuServe. You can use it to communicate and exchange files with other online services and local bulletin boards, even those that do not support B Protocol. Professional Connection version 3 also supports the popular error-checking XMODEM Protocol.

One benefit of Professional Connection version 3 is that it automatically maintains a record of your online session at your microcomputer in a software buffer called the "capture buffer." You can use the buffer throughout the session or close and reopen it at will to record selected parts.

With Professional Connection version 3, you can also create a different type of selective record called a "log file." This is a local disk file that, once created, automatically records or logs all of your conversation until you close it. It has the special advantage of being available as long as you want it, while the capture buffer is available only during a session.

Professional Connection version 3 also provides you with direct control of your printer. Not only can you start and stop printing at any time during an online session, thus creating a hard copy record of your activities, but you can also print any local disk file.

Perhaps most important, Professional Connection version 3 lets you automate all these activities plus a host of others. It includes a complete scripting facility that lets you compose files of instructions (scripts) and call them up at will. Scripts can be designed to go into action after specified delays, so you don't have to be at your micro when they are performed. Another advantage of Professional Connection version 3 is ease of operation. Its primary control center is its main menu, which offers automated direct access, not only to CompuServe but also to some of the popular individual services. The main menu also offers immediate access to other Professional Connection version 3 functions.

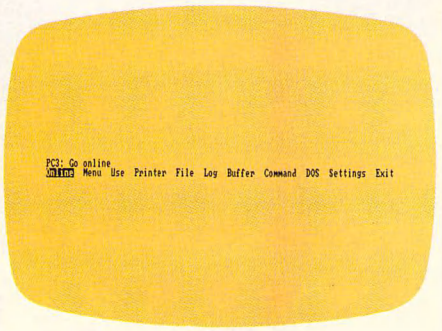


The main menu comes up as soon as you install Professional Connection version 3. It is the first thing you see when you start up the program from DOS.

To choose a main menu option, highlight it and press the Return key. You can move the highlighter around the menu with arrow keys or by pressing the first letter of the desired option. For instance, to access the Executive News Service, press E to highlight the ENS menu choice. Then press the Return key. Professional Connection version 3 does the rest, logging you onto CompuServe and taking you to ENS.

You don't have to limit the menu choices to those supplied by CompuServe. Professional Connection version 3 also has a menu editor, which you can activate by pressing the F8 key. Through this editor, you can easily add new menu choices, change the way existing ones operate or delete the ones you don't use.

Nor is the main menu the only method of operating Professional Connection version 3. Another method makes use of what is called the command-line menu. If you're familiar with Lotus products, the way this menu looks and handles will be familiar to you.



As with the main menu, you can activate any command-line menu choice by highlighting it and then pressing the Return key. But since no two menu choices have the same first letter, you can quickly make a choice by pressing the first letter of the command.

Some of the choices, such as "Online," carry all the necessary information. When you make such a choice, Professional Connection version 3 immediately performs the operation.

If you choose Online, for example, your communications port will be opened and your microcomputer will be able to connect to the telephone line. Other choices, such as File, identify categories

of operations. When you make this type of choice, Professional Connection version 3 brings up another one-line menu, where you can choose from all the operations in the category. For example, choices on the File submenu include View, Edit, Rename and Transfer.

Yet another method of performing Professional Connection version 3's functions is through the "command keys." These can be the 10 or 12 function keys marked by F1, F2 and so on. Or they can be key combinations, in which you hold down one key, such as the Alt key, while you press another.

Command keys offer the advantage of letting you perform Professional Connection version 3 functions while you are online. For example, suppose you are ready to read an article in *Grolier's Online Encyclopedia* and you want to record it in a log file. Hold down the Alt key while pressing the letter O, and give a filename (for example, A: GROLIER.LOG). From that point on, whatever you type and everything CompuServe displays on your screen will be transcribed to the file, until you stop it with a different command key.

For your convenience, Professional Connection version 3 comes with the most frequently used operations already defined as command keys and key combinations. As with main menu choices, though, you can add, delete and modify command key definitions at will.

The final and most flexible method of operating Professional Connection version 3 is through commands. In "command mode," Professional Connection version 3 prompts you for instructions, such as PC3>.

Unlike a menu, this prompt does not offer clues to what you can or should do. But the trade-off is that you can enter the information Professional Connection version 3 needs to perform even the most complex function all at once. In the command mode, for example, you could open a log file by typing the command:

```
[LOG OPEN A: GROLIER.LOG]
```

The first two parts of this command (LOG OPEN) are exactly what Professional Connection version 3 defines for the [ALT-O] command key example used above. That is the kind of information you must supply to create your own command key definitions.

Commands also have a direct correlation to the command-line menu. When you enter a complex command, it is the same as making a series of menu choices and then entering additional information. To see the log file you created above, for instance, you would enter the command:

```
[FILE VIEW A:GROLIER.LOG]
```

This is the same as choosing File from the command-line menu, then choosing View from the menu of File subcommands, and then entering:

```
[A:GROLIER.LOG]
```

when you are prompted for a filename.

As noted previously, a script is a file containing a series of Professional Connection version 3 commands. Here is a simple script file called EZLOAD.RJS:

```
SEND "GO EASYPLEX"
MATCH "!"
SEND "UPLOAD/PROTOCOL:B/TYPE A:
     MESSAGE.TXT"
MATCH "<CR>!"
SEND ""
```

This script takes you to EasyPlex from anywhere on the service. Then it waits for the blank space followed by an exclamation point that appears at the end of the EasyPlex main menu. Next it instructs CompuServe to upload A:MESSAGE.TXT, an ASCII file, using CompuServe's B Protocol. Finally, when the upload is complete and CompuServe prompts you for your next instruction, the script sends a carriage return to display the EasyPlex Send menu. From there you can choose the next step manually.

You can perform this script from anywhere in Professional Connection version 3 with a Use command. While online, you can issue a Use command by pressing the F7 key and typing the name of the script file when you are prompted for it.

This particular script file gives a good notion of how the name originated. As you can see, it consists mostly of your part in a dialogue, with just enough of CompuServe's responses thrown in to provide Professional Connection version 3 with the "cues" needed to trigger new instructions.

But a script can include any Professional Connection version 3 command. It can even include a command to use another script. You can give your scripts the "intelligence" to react in different ways to different conditions. For instance, we could have designed our sample script to display a problem notice if the upload did not work properly.

And Professional Connection version 3 commands also include the commands that control your disk operating system. That's what the DOS choice in the command-line menu means. This command gives Professional Connection version 3 direct control over your DOS, allowing you to perform DOS operations right there. Furthermore, you can design your script to call up other programs, such as word processors or text editors, and perform their tasks.

Professional Connection version 3 comes on two 5.25-inch diskettes or one 3.5-inch diskette, with a users guide that details every aspect of the program. The guide takes nothing for granted; it explains everything from the simplest aspects of communicating with CompuServe and other online services to the most complex processes of script composition and debugging.

Aside from a brief introduction and overview, the guide is organized according to function. It begins by explaining how to install Professional Connection version 3. It shows how to meet your basic communications needs and discusses each of the operation modes: the main menu, the command-line menu and the command mode. The guide describes the various ways you can customize Professional Connection version 3. Finally, there are several chapters on how to compose and perform scripts.

Armed with this guide and the many powerful capabilities of Professional Connection version 3, you can not only communicate with CompuServe but also make the most of your communications.

To order Professional Connection version 3 or to obtain more information, call CompuServe's telephone sales department at 800-848-8199 from anywhere in the United States except Ohio. From Ohio and Canada call 614/457-0802. Or, if you have an earlier version of Professional Connection, you can order Professional Connection version 3 through CompuServe's online ordering service (GO ORDER).

Tom Rauch supervises the development of user instructional materials at CompuServe.

Talk to Us

Online Today Daily Edition has a Feedback area for letters to the editor. Simply type GO OLT-33 from any prompt in the CompuServe Information Service.

ONLINE TODAY

Atari 'Community' Adds Vendor Support

by Sandra Gurvis

Atari users can now get a full range of support and services from several companies within a single forum. By using their own message subtopic, data library and online conference facility, Atari hardware and software developers provide "hot lines" for questions, products and information.

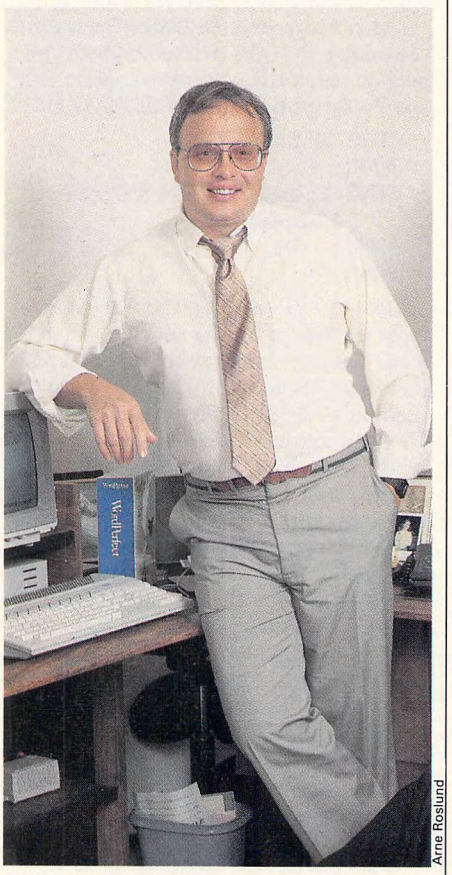
"Not only will subscribers have direct access to the company, but they also will be given advance notice on new products," observes Ron Luks, administrator for the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARIVEN). This eliminates time-consuming, long-distance phone calls and letters and gives the manufacturers immediate feedback. In addition, "subscribers may obtain 'demos' of new offerings so they can try them out," says Luks. "Users can preview products in advance of their distribution."

Vendor support will benefit the entire Atari "community" which consists of the Atari 8-Bit Forum (GO ATARI8), the Atari 16-Bit Forum (GO ATARI16), an Atari Programmers and Developers Forum (GO ATARIDEV), an Atari Users Network (GO ATA-1) and *Antic Online,* an electronic magazine (GO ANTIC). Users can review product catalogs, enhance existing programs and iron out "glitches" peculiar to their hardware or software.

The "one stop" setup benefits the vendors, too. "Having several vendors on a forum offers medium and small-sized companies a chance to provide support and information without investing in a large site of electronic real estate," comments Sharon Baker, CompuServe product manager. "It puts them in touch with their markets."

Six vendors are online, with six more expected to come online soon. The current vendors are:

- **ICD,** founded in 1984 by Mike Gustafson and Tom Harker, specializes in products for Atari 8-bit computers, and includes software and development tools for programmers and hobbyists. Among its first well-known offerings were SpartaDOS and the VS Doubler, along with the more recently developed P:R Connection. Based in Rockville, Ill., ICD recently merged with Optimized Systems Software, a systems software supply firm that developed Atari BASIC, Atari DOS and the original Apple II DOS. ICD will continue to publish and support OSS products, and will offer ACTION!, MAC/65 and BASIC XE for 8-bit Ataris, as well as Personal Pascal version 2.0 and ICD ST Host Adapter, complete hard-drive kits for Atari ST and MEGA ST computers.
- **Intersect Software's** primary product is INTERLINK, a terminal emulator for the 16-bit Atari ST.



Arne Roslund

Link to Atari vendors: *Luks*

- **Michtron** is a relative newcomer to the Atari marketplace. Within a few months, it has become one of the largest suppliers of software for the 68000-based Atari ST. Michtron began selling programs for Radio Shack computers in the late 1970s, becoming one of the leading software sources for the Tandy color computer. Their Atari programs encompass several types of functions and use GFA BASIC language, especially helpful to programmers and developers.
- **Drafix,** a drafting and computer-aided design software from Foresight Resources, assists subscribers in designing drawings, such as house blueprints and office floor plans, on their ST where such drawings can be easily manipulated and sized. It accommodates two- and three-dimensional drawings and is useful to hobbyists and professional draftsmen alike.
- **Quantum Microsystems,** a Florida-based vendor, has been supporting the Atari ST since 1985 when it released the ST-TALK modem program. The new GEM version, ST-TALK Professional, is more advanced and simplified, with an online demo available to users. QMI's offerings range from a DeskCart, which gives users 14 accessories in a plug-in ROM cartridge, to ProTablet, a professional graphics tablet that can replace the mouse device.
- **Regent Software** is a partnership between Frank Cohen and William Robinson. The California-based company specializes in databases (Regent Base), word processing (Regent Word II) and inventory management (The Inventory Manager) for 16-bit Ataris. They emphasize small business and home productivity.

Vendors see the forum as a way to provide better services rather than to enhance profits. "Messages sometimes get lost or overlooked on a busy bulletin board," remarks John DeMar of QMI. "But with this forum, users can find 24-hour-a-day support in one place and we can give quick, efficient turnaround."

Gordon Monnier of Michtron regards it as an extension of a customer service department. "Getting answers is as easy as logging on and typing a question onto your screen," he says. "We can also inform users when to expect new products and what those products will provide."

Frank Cohen of Regent Software says that "data files can have detailed information that we couldn't pack into a brochure. We can provide services that we normally wouldn't be able to offer. For example, the Regent Forum provides a place to download files for use in fourth generation programs."

They perceive shared support as the wave of the future, and forum administrator Ron Luks agrees. "Everyone benefits—the user, the vendor and the forum. And there's always room for expansion, both within the database and with new companies." So type GO ATARIVEN and make that "one stop" pay off.

Sandra Gurvis is a free-lance writer based in Columbus, Ohio. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2302.

Memos, Moon Phases Among Forum Files

The libraries in CompuServe's forums are filled with thousands of programs and textfiles. The following are a few of the files uploaded in recent months. For a more up-to-date list of uploads, check the "Uploads" columns in the *Online Today Daily Edition* by typing GO OLT-3700 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt. New columns are added twice monthly.

AMIGA FORUM
(GO AMIGAFORUM)

Backup Utility—Backer, a hard-disk backup utility for the Amiga that enables you to make backups by using the AmigaDOS archive bit of the file flags. It enables you to back up only those files that you have changed since the last backup. File BACKER.ARC in Library 9.

Virus Fighter—VirusX, a resident virus checker for the Amiga that will alert you when any inserted disk has a virus or an abnormal boot code. File VIRUSX.ARC in Library 10.

Reminder—MemoPad, a shareware appointment reminder utility for the Amiga that makes full use of the Amiga intuition environment. File MEMOPA.ARC in Library 9.

ASTRONOMY FORUM
(GO ASTROFORUM)

Moon Phases—A short, executable textfile written in Applesoft BASIC to find the phases of the moon for a given date. A public-domain program. File MPHASE.BAS in Library 7.

Japan's Plans—A transcript of a joint conference hosted by the Astronomy and Space Forums in February 1988. The guest was Prof. Minoru Oda of the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science. Topics include Japan's roles and goals in space, its cooperation with NASA and Japanese space missions. File ODA.CO in Library 9.

ATARI 8-BIT FORUM
(GO ATARI8)

Ham Call Database—A program for the Atari 8-Bit computer that helps keep track of ham call signs in a database. File CALDUP.BAS in Library 0.

Loan Program—A user-friendly program to calculate the monthly payment on a loan of any size, length and interest rate. File MONTHL.BAS in Library 5.

IBM COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO IBMCOM)

Library Aid—A new version of a utility to view, sort and search captured textfiles from CompuServe forum library descriptions. Allows 10,000 descriptions. File CATSCA.ARC in Library 2.

Communications Program—COM-AND, a communications program for the IBM PC and close compatibles. Consists of dialing directory, macros, transcripting, file transfers and more. Written to support a list of accessories, including chess and bridge games between computers, and visual conferencing. File COMAND.ARC in Library 3.

IBM NEW USERS FORUM
(GO IBMNEW)

Combat Game—An adventure text game that allows the player to use skill in combat situations as the game goes to graphics and the player fights monsters in sword-to-sword combat. File COMBAT.ARC in Library 3.

Pattern Producer—A program for the IBM PC and compatibles to draw patterns on a CGA color monitor. You control the patterns and change the colors. Music is an option. File MS.ARC in Library 5.

INVESTORS' FORUM
(GO INVFORUM)

Selling Tips—A textfile containing 12 tips for the homeowner to assist his real estate agent in marketing a home. List covers inside tricks real estate agents use to get the best price possible. File DELTIP.TXT in Library 6.

Charting Aid—A charting/technical analysis package for IBM and compatibles with an EGA card. Allows for two moving averages and moving average convergence-divergence routine. Fifty stocks/funds per file setup and 130 day/week data display. File MKTEGA.ARC in Library 1.

MAUG APPLE II/III FORUM
(GO APPLETWO)

Screen Clock—A new version of Analog Clock NDA that puts an analog and digital clock on the screen, and the date. File ACLOK.BNY in Library 4.

Envelope Printer—An envelop-printing program for the Apple IIgs using either an ImageWriter or ImageWriter II. File ENVELO.BNY in Library 4.

Housekeeper—Minifile, an NDA that gives Apple users access to several housekeeping functions, including rename, delete and move. File MINIFI.BQY in Library 4.

MAUG HYPERFORUM
(GO APPHYPER)

Phone Book—Business Phone, a phone book stack for your phone number cards. Lists them in 30 different categories. Includes pop-up menus. File BPHONE.SIT in Library 8.

Stack-Based Tutorial—A HyperCard stack tutorial based on the "Electronic Mail Made Easy" chapter of *From Yellow Pads to Computers: Transforming Your Law Practice with a Computer,* published by the American Bar Association. The tutorial compares electronic mail to alternatives. File E-MAIL.PIT in Library 6.

MAUG MAC PRO FORUM
(GO MACPRO)

Mac Errors—System Errors Table, a desk accessory for the Macintosh that shows a scrolling list of all Macintosh system errors. Documentation and customization notes included. File SYSERR.SIT in Library 5.

MAUG MAC FUN FORUM
(GO MACFUN)

Breakout—An improved version of *Brickles*, a *Breakout*-type game for all Macintosh computers. Uses one, two or four paddles. File BRICK8.BIN in Library 3.

MILITARY VETS FORUM
(GO VETFORUM)

Weather Star—A conference with Chris Noel, a radio and television weather personality from the Vietnam War—many say better-known than Adrian Cronauer of "Good Morning Vietnam" fame. File CHRIS.CO in Library 3.

MODEL 100 FORUM
(GO M100SIG)

Cost Estimator—A BASIC program and description of how to create project lists and a report generator that will add the costs incurred on the project. For Models 100, 102 and 200. File PLRG.BAS in Library 4.

Form Generator—A program for Models 100 and 200 to print business forms including sales, invoice, statement and purchase order, on an Epson printer or compatible. File HCFORM.BAS in Library 4.

David Peyton co-authored How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe *and* Advanced CompuServe for IBM PC Power Users. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,244.*

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- **Test your skill and win a prize** in our on-line Scavenger Hunt June 27 — July 4. The winner will be announced July 15.
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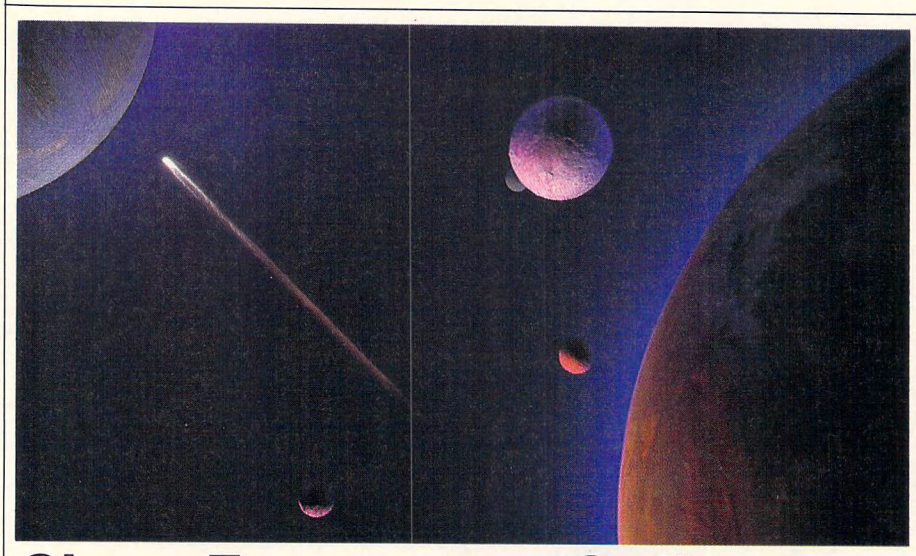
To sign up, just sign on to CompuServe and enter **GO SAC.** Or, select Shoppers Advantage from The Electronic Mall menu and select Membership sign-up from the Shoppers Advantage Directory. After 3 months, unless you notify us, we will bill you the annual fee of $30. You can cancel at any time and receive a full refund of your current annual fee. **Offer expires 7/31/88, so sign up now!**

GO OLI or circle 6 on the Reader Service Form.



Close Encounters Online

Space and Astronomy Forums Probe the Heavens

by Yvonne Heather Burry

Halley's Comet recently passed our way. And not long ago an exploding star crossed the night sky. We marvel at such heavenly phenomena, as well as at the possibilities of space stations and UFOs. The night sky is full of secrets, and CompuServe's Space and Astronomy Forums are humming with activity from curious astronomy enthusiasts in search of answers.

"The space/astronomy area of CompuServe is an integrated product made up of the Space Forum (GO SPACEFORUM), the Astronomy Forum (GO ASTROFORUM), the Space Education Forum (GO SPACEED) and the Space/Astronomy DISPLA Database," says Dick DeLoach, forum administrator.

Active online subscriber participation has helped spur many innovative programs. In the Space Forum, for example, CompuServe arranged a first-time-ever link between the online subscribers and a PBS network television program that explored the relationship between science fiction and science fact. "Comments and questions from the online participants scrolled across the bottom third of the TV screen during the show, and the TV studio guests—several prominent science fiction authors—reacted to a number of them," says DeLoach. Several weeks of active online preparation in the Space Forum preceded the broadcast.

With more TV/CompuServe links planned for 1988, and with the upcoming rejuvenation of the space shuttle program launches, DeLoach expects a dramatic increase in Space Forum activity.

In 1986, the Astronomy Forum spun off from the Space Forum because of the "interest kindled by the Halley's Comet phenomenon," says DeLoach. To help respond to subscriber interest, CompuServe arranged for *Sky & Telescope* magazine editors to be available for online questioning. Now Senior Editor J. Kelly Beatty serves as forum conference coordinator, chairing discussions and filling the forum with knowledgeable speakers. In addition, top executives from each of the four largest manufacturers of astronomy products—Celestron, Meade, Lumicon and TeleVue—access the forum to interact with CompuServe subscribers.

The Space/Education Forum is designed for "teachers, students and ordinary citizens interested in the partnership between space and education," says DeLoach. An early forum project, NORSTAR, came from a NASA program in which students from Norfolk, Va., designed experiments for a space shuttle flight. Students reported their progress and queried "mentors" online. Now, other students are working on a "Mission to Mars" simulation.

In the Space/Astronomy Database, even a star-gazing novice can be accommodated. Last fall, an eight-week formal workshop on cosmology (the study of the origins of the universe) was made available through a cooperative venture with the Ontario Science Center in Toronto. Four faculty members of OSC each prepared two "lectures," which were uploaded, one per week, as textfiles. Discussion questions at the end of each lecture provided "lively threads on the Astronomy Forum message board," says DeLoach. RLE graphics files were available to support each lecture, and the lecturer appeared in that week's online conference.

"Subscribers with a special expertise provide information each week," DeLoach reports. Topics covered include:

- Sky at a Glance—for beginning amateur astronomers and planetary observers.
- World of the Planetarium—directories and "tours" of planetariums for planetarium managers, show producers, lecturers and their audiences.
- Amateur Telescope Making—for hobbyists who enjoy handcrafting.
- Astrophotography—for the large group of online participants interested in producing their own astrophotographs.
- American Sunspot Program—designed for amateur and professional solar astronomers or those interested in the sun.
- Tour of the Cosmos—intended for secondary school students and their teachers, plus the general public with little formal exposure to astronomy.
- Astronomy News—for professionals and serious amateurs.
- Cosmology Workshop—a general audience feature for participants with some college-level training.
- Aerospace News—a large number of features for general audiences.
- Aerospace Program Spinoffs—for general audiences.
- Space Program Spinoffs—for general audiences.
- US Manned Spaceflight Archive—for general audiences.
- NORSTAR Student Spaceflight Project—for teachers and students.
- UFO Information Database—for general audiences.

Space, the last frontier, is explored, probed, questioned and ventured into in CompuServe's Space and Astronomy Forums—where celestial possibilities are bright stars of conversation.

Yvonne Heather Burry is a free-lance writer in Columbus, Ohio. Her CompuServe User ID number is 76703,3057.

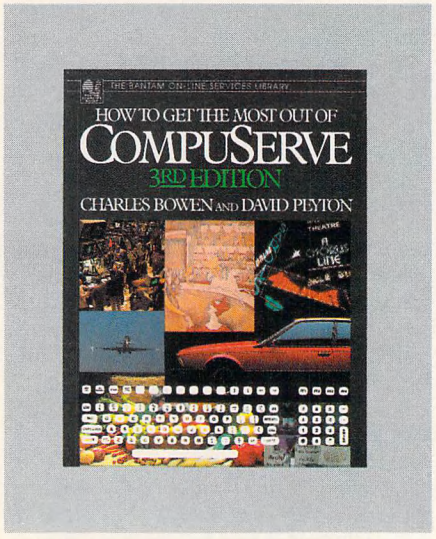
Online Club Sign-ups Save Time, Money

Three Electronic Mall® stores now offer CompuServe users the opportunity to join special clubs or subscribe to a series online. Here's a summary of the merchants and their offers:

RCA Music Service, a service of BMG Direct Marketing, provides an easy, economical way to build entertainment libraries through membership in any or all of four clubs: RCA Music Service Club, RCA's CD Club, RCA's Video Club and The International Preview Society.

Each of the clubs has incentives for joining. RCA Music Service Club's introductory offer, for example, features eight records or cassettes for the price of one, with no further purchase obligations. New members signing up for the CD Club may select three CDs for free when they agree to buy only two more at regular prices during the next two years. A description of each club, the current offer and operating policies is provided online.

To join any of the clubs, CompuServe subscribers can make their selections online. The electronic catalog for the Video Club, for example, contains more than 200 selections, including classic movies, new releases and music videos. To discover the benefits of club membership, GO RCA.



The Small Computer Book Club, another Mall merchant, has a free gift for CompuServe subscribers who join online. The gift, the Third Edition of *How To Get The Most Out of CompuServe*, is free with any of the club's seven special introductory offers.

The Small Computer Book Club has a variety of microcomputer books discounted by up to 30 percent off publishers' prices. Club membership makes it easy to keep up with the latest developments and improvements in software, hardware, applications and programming languages.

New members start saving immediately by taking the set of their choice for $4.95. Seven sets, with values up to $92.80, are described online. Select the Desktop Publishing Library, the On-Line Communications Library, or the DBase III Plus Programming Library. Other choices include sets for the IBM PC, the Apple, the Macintosh and the Commodore.

The IBM set, for example, valued at $85.80, includes four volumes: *The Peter Norton Programmer's Guide to the IBM PC; Inside the IBM PC: Revised and Enlarged; Programmer's Problem Solver for the IBM PC, PC-XT and PC-AT;* and *Advanced MS- DOS: The Microsoft Guide for Assembly Language and Programmers*. New members get all four books in the series for only $4.95. For more information on membership in the Small Computer Book Club, GO BK.

Time-Life Books offers subscribers the chance to explore and understand the world of computers through a comprehensive series of books, Understanding Computers. Designed for beginning as well as more advanced users, the books feature full-color picture essays, close-up photos and precision cutaway drawings.

The first volume in the series, *Computer Basics*, is a useful guide to the fundamental principles of computers and how they operate. Subscribers can order this volume online at Time-Life Books' Mall store. *Computer Basics* will be sent on a 10-day examination basis; if, after 10 days, you don't feel you've begun understanding computers better, you may return the volume and owe nothing. If you keep the book, you'll become a subscriber to the Understanding Computers series. Full details on the series and membership guidelines are available online. To open up the world of computers, GO TL.

Photographic Illustrators

In Pursuit of Detail

Trivia Games Challenge Wit and Stump the Mind

by Jim McCann

In concert with a country caught up in a trivia craze, CompuServe provides subscribers with challenges that stretch minds and test knowledge on a wide range of topics.

The trivia game databases on the CompuServe Information Service would seem to be the logical place to stimulate the mind with details. But many online forums also offer trivia.

Students in the sixth and seventh grades at The Columbus (Ohio) Academy started their own trivia game called *Trivia Ten* in the Students' Forum (GO STUFO). Students write questions on general topic trivia and upload them into the forum every Wednesday. Players have until Tuesday to answer the questions before the winners are awarded two days of free connect time in the forum.

Dave Winslow, Columbus Academy teacher and Students' Forum administrator, says he came up with the idea "to get the kids more involved with CompuServe and give them a chance to do something creative."

Rock 'n' rollers can test their knowledge of the movers and shakers in the rock world, past and present, by playing *Rock Trivia* in the Rocknet Forum (GO ROCKNET) Thursday and Sunday nights. Les Tracy, operations manager of radio rock station KSMJ in Sacramento, selects the rock trivia questions and awards prizes of albums and cassettes to winners.

And for CompuServe subscribers who love to play games, there is a special trivia contest called *Trivia Challenge* in The Gamers' Forum (GO GAMER). Forum member Andy Gore developed *Trivia Challenge* as a variation to *Trivial Pursuit*. The contest is played every Sunday at 8 p.m. EDT. Winners can pick a prize from the Nightie's Grab Bag, which is filled with games.

In the Science Fiction Forum (GO SCI-FI), there is ongoing trivia about popular science fiction television and radio shows, such as "Star Trek," "Outer Limits," "Dr. Who" and "Blake's Seven." Science fiction trivia usually takes place Thursday at 9:30 p.m. EDT during the forum's biggest conference.

Every Tuesday at 9 p.m. EDT in the Florida Forum (GO FLORIDA) there is an ongoing game of Disney trivia. Contestants are asked questions on Disney characters, movies and theme parks. Correct responses earn points that can accumulate from week to week and then be traded for prizes or free connect time in the forum. Prizes given away in the past have included Disney beach towels, cookbooks, key rings and three-day passports to Walt Disney World.

Want to learn helpful information about your health and have fun while doing it? Then join the members in the Consumer Health Forum (GO GOODHEALTH) for an educational game of trivia covering health-related subjects. Winners are awarded free time in the forum.

If you have an idea for a trivia game that you'd like to start in a forum, get in touch with that forum's administrator.

CompuServe games found under Trivia/Thought Games (GO TTGAMES) offer the choice of educational or entertainment games that can be played individually or with multiple players.

Educational games, such as *Whiz Quiz, Science Trivia, Baffle Word Games, Super Brain Challenge* and *State Capitals,* offer adults and youths a chance to learn while having fun.

Whiz Quiz (GO WHIZ) will test your knowledge in a variety of categories, including current events, movies, sports, music, literature and history. A session with this game can have you searching through the online *Academic American Encyclopedia* (GO AAE) to aid in answering the questions. Sponsored by Grolier's Electronic Publishing, provider of the online encyclopedia, the game can be played by up to four people, with the top 10 scores for a session entered in the Wizard Hall of Fame.

If you enjoy mathematics and the sciences, *Science Trivia* (GO SCITRIVIA) is for you. Challenge the top scorers in the *Science Trivia* Hall of Fame by testing your knowledge in chemistry, physics, biology and mathematics. To play the game, answer the multiple-choice questions as fast as possible. Points will be given for each correct answer and the top scores will be entered in the Hall of Fame. The questions are changed weekly, so you can keep your science I.Q. high by playing often.

Baffling Word Games (GO BAFFLE) is a fun way to test your vocabulary, learn new words, or both. The object is to form words by using adjacent letters appearing on the screen. But you have only three minutes to form as many words as you can.

The Super Brain Challenge (GO TMC-19) is for trivia experts looking for a special challenge. The questions are tough, and by the time you com-

plete the game, you'll have a feel for the difference between "genius" and "bright." This is not a game for the timid! Answering the 25 questions correctly is difficult, but speed is part of the challenge. Points for correct answers and speed are displayed at the end of the game.

Kids interested in a fun way of learning the state capitals and other facts about states can play *State Capitals* (GO TMC-44). Questions are asked about a state, and the object is to choose one of four cities listed as the correct state capital. Other trivia questions, such as "What is the state bird?," may be asked. Points are given for each correct answer and the total is displayed at the end of the game.

Trivia thought games that are more of the entertainment type but still challenging, include *ShowbizQuiz, Hollywood Hotline, Word Scramble, You Guessed It!, Stage II—Two Stage Trivia* and *Multiple Choice Games*.

ShowbizQuiz (GO SHOWBIZ) tests your knowledge with questions about the entertainment world in a variety of categories, such as John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra, Hollywood scandals or the "Star Wars" saga.

For those who enjoy a daily dose of trivia, *Hollywood Hotline* (GO HOLLYWOOD) provides a daily question to stump you on subjects in the entertainment world.

"Mifnooartin" is something you might find in *Word Scramble* (GO SCRAMBLE), where the computer jumbles words for you to unscramble. The game can be played by one or two players at the same terminal, and scores of more than 200 will be entered into the Hall of Fame.

For those who have always wanted to be on a game show but are unlikely to get the chance, the game *You Guessed It!* (GO YGI) is the next best thing. The game is a real-time, multiplayer game show simulation in which players form teams and answer general trivia questions. There is interaction between teams, as well as with a cast of "online personalities."

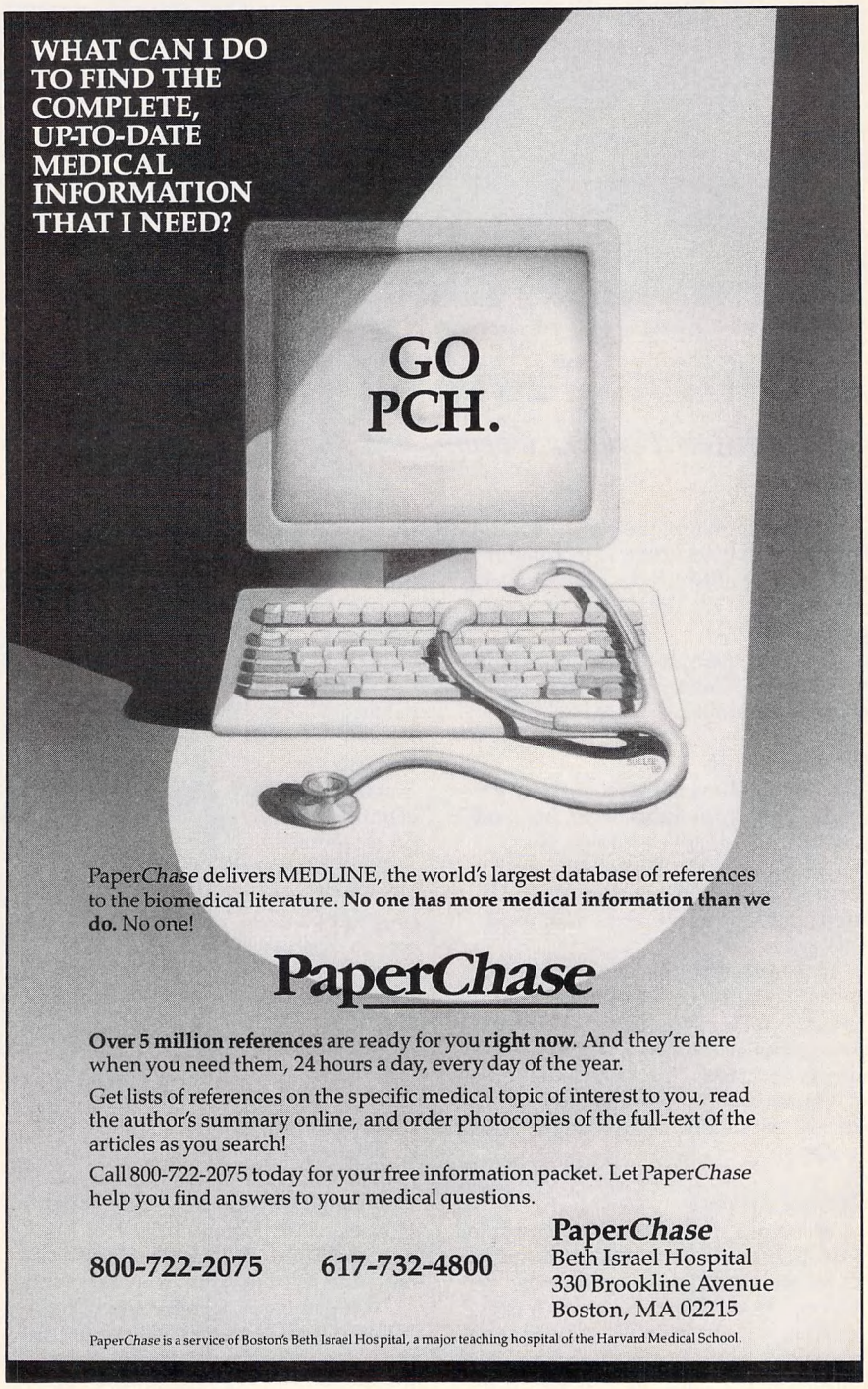
Stage II—Two Stage Trivia (GO STAGEII) is a unique game in which you answer three trivia questions in a row and then the fourth question asks for the common theme in the answers.

The Multiple Choice game (GO TMC) includes a collection of trivia questions for adults and kids. Adult games include *Trivia for Everyone, Slogans For Sale* (trivia on popular television and radio commercials), *Classic Quotes* and *Witty Write-ins*.

Kids games include *Silly Fill-ins, Sports Rule Quiz, Jumbled Words* and *So You Think You Know Me*—a test of how much you know about the people who are important to you.

So now you have it—a chance to stump your mind, challenge your wits and unravel words on CompuServe, all in the pursuit of knowledge.

Jim McCann is an Online Today *editorial intern from Ohio State University.*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GO OLI or circle 7 on the Reader Service Form.

Kenneth Warren

Night lights: *Westminster Bridge and Houses of Parliament*

A British Taste of Life

London Offers Theater, Shopping and Royalty

by Ben Knox

"When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford." So said Samuel Johnson in 1777. His comment is still true today.

It would take years to sample all the delights of London, so a visit must be planned carefully.

Where to Stay

London offers all levels of accommodations, from inexpensive bed-and-breakfasts to the well-known grand hotels, such as the Savoy, Ritz and Hilton. With the bigger hotels, you need to make reservations well in advance.

If you want to take a risk and find accommodations once you arrive in London, take a look in the classified advertising section of a weekly magazine called *Time Out*—available at most newsstands and an invaluable source of information about what is happening in London.

Getting Around

There are two modes of public transportation available in central London. The underground or subway (usually referred to as "the tube") and buses.

The tube can get very crowded, hot and stuffy in the summer—especially during the morning and evening rush hours—so you would do well to find which bus routes go near your hotel.

But if you do decide to take the tube, keep an eye out for the "buskers" (entertainers) in some of the bigger stations (Charing Cross, Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square)—they are often talented professionals.

Taxis are generally worth using only late at night due to expensive rates. There is a minimum charge of almost $2, which is quickly used up in traffic jams.

Kenneth Warren

Brave busker: *Street stage*

Historical Sights

London is perhaps best known for its historical sights—the impressive St. Paul's and Westminster Cathedrals, Houses of Parliament, Tower of London and Tower Bridge, Nelson's Column and Marble Arch, to name a few.

Many areas of London are rich with history: Visit Trafalgar Square to feed the pigeons, or tour Downing Street, the home of the prime minister. Fleet Street, until recently, was the center of British newspaper publishing. Over the last few years, however, many of the large national papers have moved to the London Docklands.

Covent Garden is a bustling square flanked by craft stalls, design studios and restaurants. Singers and street entertainers perform in the main square, often encouraging audience participation.

Thom Misiak

Tudor home: *Thames*

If the weather is fine, a boat trip down the Thames to Greenwich is recommended (the boats start at Westminster Pier, just by the Palace of Westminster). Greenwich is associated with England's nautical history. Greenwich Park offers a delightful place to walk. You can visit the old Royal Observatory based in the center of the park. Near the riverfront a large sailing boat, the Cutty Sark, is in dry dock. For a small charge, you can tour the boat. Also in Greenwich is the National Maritime Museum, which holds one of Britain's finest collections of ship models, paintings, navigational instruments, costumes and weapons.

Indoor Entertainment

It is always a good idea, when on holiday in Britain, to prepare an itinerary of places to visit in case of rain. There are museums and art galleries to keep you busy for many an afternoon. South Kensington has a concentration of museums, including the Science, Natural History, and Victoria and Albert museums.

At Madame Tussaud's wax museum you can meet the wax statues of hundreds of famous people from British history. Likenesses of famous murderers are found in the Chamber of Horrors.

The National Gallery overlooks Trafalgar Square and holds a fine collection of paintings from many schools of art. This gallery is rich in early Italian, Dutch and Flemish, Spanish and British paintings.

If you're interested in later periods of art, the Tate Gallery is the place to go. The gallery has opened a wing devoted to the British painter, Joseph Turner.

Royalty

You cannot come to London without seeing some of the royal monuments or ceremonies. Two of the most impressive

Kenneth Warren

Standing tall: *Tower Bridge*

sights are the Tower of London and Tower Bridge. Both are open for tours. At the Tower of London you will find the crown jewels, Britain's largest collection of armor and arms, the Tower ravens and the Beefeaters. The Ceremony of the Keys, in which the West Gates, Middle Tower and Byward Tower are locked, is held after 9 p.m. every day. This is one of the oldest military ceremonies in the world.

Thom Misiak

Ceremony: *Guard*

The changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace is another daily ceremony, occurring at 11:30 a.m. You must arrive very early to get close enough to the gate to be able to see anything.

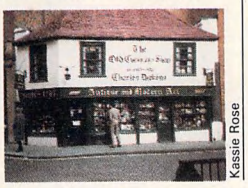
You can see another changing of the guard ceremony at Windsor Castle each day at 10:30 a.m. (Windsor is west of London in Berkshire—well worth a day's trip).

The royal parks are beautiful places to wander lazily or to lie in the sun. A walk in a park is often a welcome rest from the hustle and bustle of London. St. James's Park, the oldest royal park, is near Buckingham Palace and has a lake, quaint footbridges and a bird sanctuary.

Regent's Park (in North London near Camden Town) has the Serpentine River, for which you can hire a row boat. Next to Regent's Park is the London Zoo, which offers a world-renowned selection of rare animals and birds.

Shopping

Harrods, London's best-known department store, is based in Knightsbridge, the expensive end of town, as are other famous stores, such as Harvey Nichols. If Knightsbridge is out of your price range, Oxford Street and Regent Street are next best. Oxford Street is where you will find Selfridges, Debenhams and D.H. Evans. On Regent Street, watch for Dickens and Jones, Jaeger and Liberty.


Kassie Rose

Unique antiques: *Shop*

Kenneth Warren

Bustling square: *Covent Garden*

Near Regent Street is Piccadilly, where you will find Fortnum & Mason, an excellent place to stop for a cup of tea during the afternoon.

Food and Drink

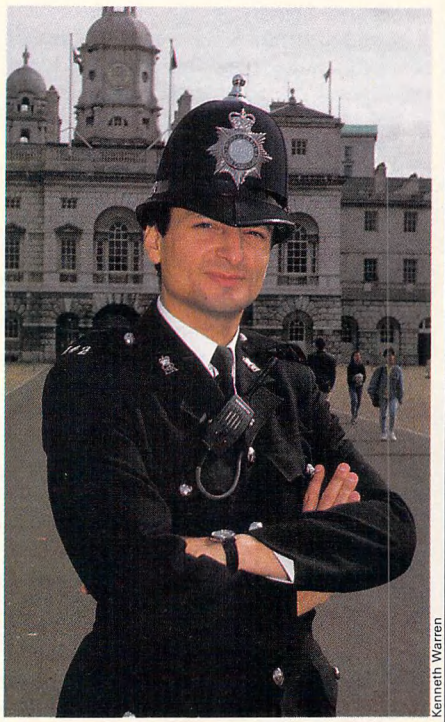
London offers a wide range of restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs. Perhaps the highest concentration can be found in Soho (south of Oxford Street), where there are restaurants specializing in just about every imaginable style of cooking. For good Chinese food, however, work your way a little further south to London's Chinatown.

L'Escargot (Greek Street, Soho) offers consistently good French cuisine. Rowley's (Jermyn Street, Piccadilly) offers only one main course, an excellent entrecote steak with as many fries as you want. For a traditional English meal, try Simpsons-in-the-Strand (Strand, Charing Cross), which has a delightfully "old" atmosphere. Proper dress is required.

Hotel restaurants are generally not up to the standard of other restaurants. The Ritz is one exception, especially for afternoon tea—also requiring proper dress.

Kenneth Warren

Royal monument: *Tour the Tower of London's treasures*


Kenneth Warren

Patrolling policeman: *London bobby*

You will find many of that great British institution—the "pub"—wherever you go. Two of my favorites are the Punch and Judy Pub in Covent Garden and the Charles Dickens Pub at St. Catherine's Dock (near Tower Bridge). These are both "traditional" pubs. Pubs vary greatly in quality. As a general rule, however, the more "rundown" and the less modern they look, the better they are. If you find one with sawdust on the floor, you're on to a winner!

Kenneth Warren

Outlandish: *Londoners*

Theatre and Nightlife

Look in *Time Out* magazine for details of plays and live shows in town.

The Hippodrome (on Charing Cross Road) is London's most spectacular nightclub, with a computerized sound and light system, six bars and a restaurant. On a smaller scale, Stringfellows (St. Martin's Lane) is especially popular with celebrities (local and international).

Of course, these are just a small number of things you can do in London. Magazines such as *Time Out* and newspapers will keep you informed of any special events.

CompuServe has a number of services to offer anyone traveling to London. Type GO TRAVEL at any CompuServe prompt to get to the travel section. From here you can look into airline flight times and dates with the Official Airline Guide Electronic Edition (GO OAG), Travelshopper (GO PARS) or Eaasy Sabre (GO EAASYSABRE). You can check information about hotels using the ABC Worldwide Hotel Guide (GO ABC), the Official Airline Guide or Eaasy Sabre. Finally, you can talk to other travelers about the best places to visit in the Travel Forum (GO TRAVSIG), gather a wide selection of travel tips from Information USA (GO IUS-1551), or access passport and visa information by using Visa Advisors (GO VISA).

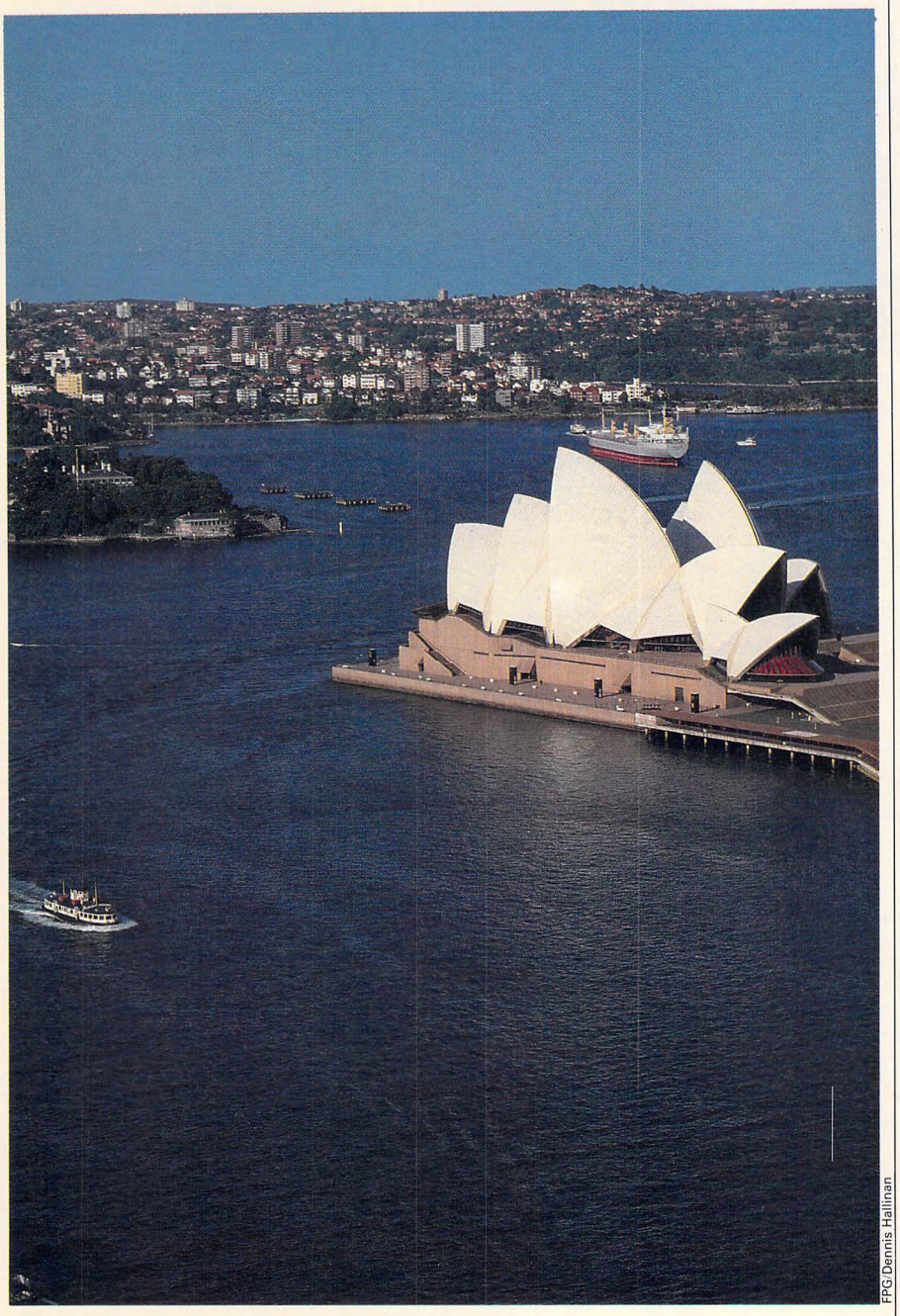
Kenneth Warren

On duty: *On horseback*

Ben Knox is a free-lance writer based in London. His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,3025.

Kenneth Warren

Royal wedding on display: *Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum*



FPG/Dennis Hallinan

Harbor this view: *Opera House in Sydney, Australia*

'Down Under' Discovery

Visitors Find a Land of Plenty in Sydney

by Jonathan Ganz

When Captain James Cook first landed on the island continent of Australia on April 29, 1770, he was convinced that the island had much to offer the British crown. Other explorers of Portuguese, Dutch and British origin had characterized the land as "the barrenest spot upon the globe." Cook is given his due as a visionary of this strange and beautiful country in many of the historical sites in and around the area where he first landed.

Sydney is the largest city in Australia, with a population of 3.5 million in a country about the area of the United States (excluding Alaska) and with a total population equal to that of southern California. Travelers often romanticize a picture of Sydney, with kangaroos and koalas dancing on the runway between crocodile-infested swamps, and airplane pilots maneuvering around them while taxiing to the gate. But this version doesn't match the modern, busy and immaculately clean city, which boasts weather much like that of the southern California coast and an opera house of international acclaim.

Australian weather

The seasons in Australia are the reverse of those in the United States. Summer lasts from December through February, with temperatures ranging from 78 degrees to more than 100 degrees. During the spring (late October to late November), which some consider the best time of year to visit, the days and evenings are mild. It rains occasionally, and the temperature ranges from sweater weather at night to shorts and a suntan during the day. (If you visit Australia during summer or spring months, be sure to take sun lotion to the beach. Even if you're used to lying in the sun for hours in the United States, take care; the sun is probably more intense than you're used to.) During winter, the average daytime temperature is 55 degrees.

Whenever you decide to visit Australia, it is a good idea to check the weather with CompuServe's online weather reports before you leave. These can be viewed by typing GO APV at any prompt and choosing Option 2, "Weather."

Things To Do

If you're an American citizen, you have a great advantage because Australians love Americans. If you have contacts in Australia, you should give them a call, even if they are as remote as friends of friends. They'll likely be enthusiastic about showing you the local hangouts. (If you call someone from a phone booth, remember to press the "A" marked in white as soon as the person answers. If you forget or don't do it fast enough, you'll be disconnected and will lose your money.)

A few words of caution: Be prepared, when you visit the local night spots, to talk extemporaneously about a variety of subjects, including politics in America. Australians in general and Sydney residents in particular are intensely interested and want to hear

FPG/Travelpix

Loosening up 'down under': *Bondi Beach in Sydney*

your opinions. I spent many a long night locked in friendly banter, sipping from keg-size schooners of beer.

Another advantage of being an American in Australia is that you can get into chic clubs without being a member. One of the more famous of these night spots is Rogues, located near the corner of William and Crown Streets downtown. Generally, they allow in only members, but if you tell the receptionist you're a visiting American and smile a lot, she'll probably let you in.

Rogues is as famous for the clientele as for the atmosphere. The party, which includes dancing, good food and drinks, starts when most other places in Sydney are closing for the evening, so don't bother to go before 11 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday are the busiest nights. Dresses and suits are required. If you can't get into Rogues, however, take a cab to The Caldron, about 10 minutes away. It's similar to Rogues, but easier to get into.

Where to Eat

Sydney is renowned for excellent food. There are too many good restaurants to name, offering specialties from spicey Thai in Manly and Chinese in Sydney's Chinatown, to good old beef ribs. If you are really hungry, though, you must go to the No Name Cafe. It has a strictly word-of-mouth business and is located above a pool hall on Francis Street a few blocks from Hyde Park. It's in the same area as Rogues, but the only way to find it is to ask a local resident.

The food at No Name is very good and portions are large. You can either bring your own drink (they sell soft drinks downstairs), or drink the local equivalent of Tang offered with all meals. I suggest you order an entree and salad, or the main course and a salad. All three are too much, even if you are famished (the soup is easily a meal in itself). The best time to go is for lunch, but get there no later than 11:30. It gets crowded very fast.

If you love seafood, you'll love Sydney. One restaurant stands out as the most unpretentious and delectable: Chris', about two blocks from the Wynyard railway station, offers an excellent variety of seafood dishes, and if the waiter tells you the fish is fresh, he means it. If you plan to go to Chris' for dinner (they also serve lunch), be sure to get there no later than 7:30 p.m. They close promptly at 8 p.m. and lock the doors by 7:45 p.m.

If you get to the area early and want to walk around, you are just a few long blocks from an area known by the locals as The Rocks. This is the first place where convicts from Captain Arthur Phillip's First Fleet began to chisel out the beginnings of a town on January 26, 1788.

How to Get Around

Sydney has one of the best ground transportation systems. Cabs are plentiful and the drivers are friendly (also, they don't expect tips). Buses are regular. But the best and fastest way to get around is to take the underground rail system. The subways are fast, clean (without graffiti) and safe, and the people are friendly.

If you are going to be in Sydney for at least one week, you can buy a Rail/Bus/Ferry Purple Travelpass for 23 Australian dollars (about $15 in US currency). Basically, it gives you unlimited travel (except before 9 a.m.) on all public transportation, including the ferry system, which offers an up-close view of most of the major sites around the harbor, including the Opera House. You can get the Purple Travelpass at any subway ticket counter.

How to Get There from Here

There are several services available on CompuServe that can help you with your travel plans. A travel visa is required for all tourists. You can get one free from any Australian consulate with a valid US passport. You can also get help from the Visa Advisors (GO VISA), and, for a fee, they'll take care of all paperwork.

Flights leave several times a day from most US cities. You can get specific flight arrival and departure times and book reservations through the Official Airline Guide (GO OAG) and through Travelshopper (GO PARS) and Eaasy Sabre (GO EAASYSABRE). Hotel information is offered through Eaasy Sabre (GO EAASYSABRE), OAG (GO OAG) and the ABC Hotel Guide (GO ABC). Other general travel information is available by typing GO TRAVEL at any prompt.

The best advice I can give is this: Once you've checked into your hotel, put on some comfortable clothes (Australians are casual dressers) and go out to eat or swim in the crystalline blue waters off the fine sand beaches, but be sure to enjoy this land of plenty.

Jonathan Ganz is a free-lance writer based in Portola Valley, Calif. His CompuServe User ID number is 74425,1054.

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Travelshopper Lets You Browse and Book Flights Online

by Jim McCann

CompuServe subscribers looking for an easier way to make vacation plans can use Travelshopper, a program that provides convenient access to up-to-the-minute airline flight schedules, availability and fares—including a low fare finder. Travelshopper, provided by PARS Travel Information Systems, enables you to access and book airline, car and hotel reservations online.

Travelshopper can be used via Browse or Book modes. Browse mode can be used by any subscriber to check flight schedules, compare fares and draw up an itinerary, but reservations cannot be made in this mode.

How to Enroll

To book a reservation, you first must enroll in Travelshopper.

Enrollment is free and can be done easily online by choosing Option 3 on the Travelshopper menu. You will be prompted to choose one or both of two frequent flyer plans, Northwest Airline's WorldPerks or TWA's Frequent Flight Bonus Program, or Travelshopper. New members receive frequent flyer bonus mileage for enrolling and booking reservations in Travelshopper.

After you choose the plan that fits your travel needs, Travelshopper will prompt you for your name, address, telephone number and credit card information. Once you enter this information, Travelshopper displays a personal membership number for each program joined. Be sure to make a note of these numbers for making future reservations.

The first time you use your membership to book a flight, Travelshopper will prompt you to select a password. Your password and membership number will be needed to make reservations.

Before starting the booking process, it is helpful to review the commands used in Travelshopper under Option 2. Your normal CompuServe commands may not work or have the same effect in Travelshopper.

To Review Fares and Restrictions

To access the Travelshopper main menu, choose Option 5 on the PARS menu and select the first option, "Available Flights/Book Flights."

Suppose you wish to make vacation plans from Chicago to Tampa, Fla., for two adults and one youth, and you prefer a 10 a.m. departure on July 7. You can start with flight availability or fare displays. If you are interested in getting the best bargain, type F. Travelshopper will prompt you for your departure city or code. In this example, type Chicago or CHI at the prompt. You will be asked for your destination city. Type Tampa or TPA. You will then be prompted for the departure date. Type 07JUL. If you need help finding a city or airline code, choose Option 4 from the Travelshopper menu.

Next you will be prompted to choose the type of fare: adult (normal fares); adult (normal and special); youth (ages 2-11); military, government, gold and white FFB (Frequent Flight Bonus) card.

In this example, adult (normal and special) is selected. Travelshopper will prompt you for the airline name or code if you wish to use a specific carrier, or press the Return key for a display of all available fares. Press the Return key again to display additional fares. Once you choose a fare, type in that line number for additional information. It is important to see if there are any restrictions applicable for that fare. Also, be sure to make a note of the booking code that will be used to complete the reservation. After you have selected the desired fare and checked the restrictions, you are ready to reserve your seats.

Selecting a Flight Schedule

To access the flight availability display, type A. You will be prompted for your desired departure time to the nearest hour. For 10 a.m., type 10A at the prompt, or press the Return key if you have no preference. You will then be asked how many seats are required. In this example, you would type three. Travelshopper will display all available flights on all airlines, starting with the flights closest to your preferred departure time. Type the line number of the flight you prefer, and Travelshopper will display the reservation details, showing you which classes of services are available.

Next, take the booking code that you wrote down from the fare displays and type the line number that corresponds to that booking code. If your seats are available, the reservation will be confirmed.

To book your return flight, type RF and Travelshopper will prompt you for the departure date and time, and display a list of flight schedules. Once you have booked your return flight, your reservations are confirmed.

Finding the Lowest Fare

To use the Low Fare Finder feature, type LF at the prompt after you have completed your booking. A list of the lowest fares for the flights you have chosen will be displayed. You have the option to book at the lower fare or to keep your present fares.

Ticketing and Special Requests

Travelshopper will prompt you for personal information to complete the ticketing process and give you a personal confirmation number. If you request that your ticketing be handled by an authorized PARS Travel Agency, you are reminded to access the message center under Option 4 of Travelshopper's main menu. Here you can send special requests, such as seat assignments, special meals, and special arrangements for the handicapped or children traveling alone.

Other Services

In addition to flight schedules and fare information, Travelshopper offers services to assist travelers. To access these services, select "Other Services/Nice to Know" from the main menu. These include air mileage between selected domestic and international cities, current local time in selected domestic and international cities, currency conversions, and weather information for cities around the world. Also, TWA Frequent Flight Bonus members can review the mileage accrued in their accounts.

Help Desk

If you have a question on how to use the service, contact the Travelshopper Help Desk at 1-800-892-1011. To access Travelshopper, type GO PARS at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

CompuServe offers a variety of other travel services that provide travel information, tours and forums. To keep up to date on new features and services, select Option 1, "What's New in Travel," from the Travel and Leisure menu (GO TRAVEL).

Jim McCann is an Online Today *editorial intern from Ohio State University.*

Rent, Buy or Swap the World Around

by Lindsy Van Gelder

Seven years ago, Howard Houck, an avid boatsman from the San Francisco Bay area, decided to spend his vacation sailing around Puget Sound. The problem was getting his sailboat 700 miles up the coast. Maybe there was another boat owner in Seattle with the opposite problem, Houck mused; wouldn't it be great if they could simply exchange boats—and maybe houses, too?

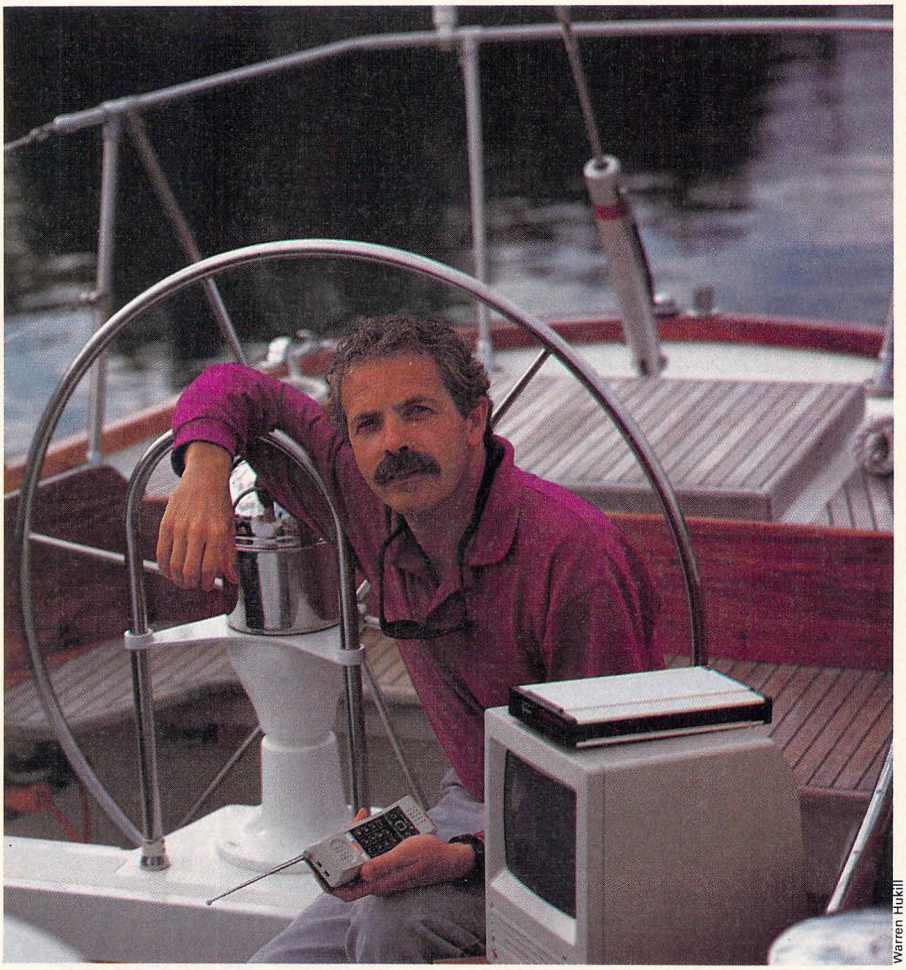
Beyond musing, Houck put his thoughts to work and thereafter established the WorldWide Exchange, a service that enables people to rent, buy or swap just about anything, from a recreation vehicle to an Alpine chalet.

What makes the Exchange different from similar services is that its listings exist not just on paper, but online. Houck, who used computers in his work as an educator, subscribed to CompuServe as soon as he had his company up and running. He has since formed alliances with exchange groups in Europe, Australia and elsewhere. CompuServe subscribers can check out his offerings in dozens of countries by typing GO WWX.

You might not think your Vermont farmhouse, your L.A. apartment, or your Wisconsin lake cottage is particularly exotic, but a European who wants to vacation here and save on hotel bills might feel differently. And what is home to them might seem exotic to you.

For example, recent listings of homes available for a United States swap have included a three-bedroom house in an old mill on the Riviera, complete with live-in caretakers; an air-conditioned bungalow outside Nairobi (with a possible bike and car exchange as part of the deal); a condo near Geneva with swimming, tennis and summer skiing; a two-bedroom house near the Baltic Sea and the medieval town of Luxemburg in West Germany; and a vacation house on the Dordogne River in France. And if you happen to have a 35- to 50-foot sailboat moored in the Mediterranean, there is a San Francisco man who wants to exchange a Dutch canal boat, currently based in the south of France, with two double staterooms, a four-burner stove, refrigerator, central heating and table seating for six.

Some international homeowners are open to all exchanges, while others specify a particular part of the United States where they want to travel. (California seems especially popular, but there have been recent requests for accommodations in Colorado, Florida and Louisiana, too.) The listings include both primary and secondary residences.



Warren Hukill

Arranging international exchanges: *Koppel*

If you don't find what you want, you can list your own home with the service, for as little as $19.95 for a full year. According to Houck's partner, Curtis Koppel, your listing will go online within seven days, and it will also be listed in the company's printed version. The service charges no commission to either party. "If you advertised in your local newspaper, you probably couldn't reach beyond a 200-mile radius," says Koppel. "We think this is a great deal, because you're reaching people all over the world—for less money."

Potential swappers often ask whether they are required to accept a swap if they list with WWX (no), whether it is risky to exchange (not as risky as leaving your house untended—and in any case, mutual tenancy probably encourages practice of the Golden Rule), and whether they need to make special insurance arrangements (check with your insurance agent, but odds are you're already covered or can get the appropriate coverage for as little as $2 a day).

How far in advance of your planned vacation should you make an exchange arrangement? "Some people start advertising in the winter for the summer," says Koppel, "but this is also a great medium for the impulsive. And CompuServe subscribers see the listings weeks before everybody else does."

Subscribers with other questions can call WorldWide Exchange at 408-425-0531, or write to Houck via EasyPlex at 76703,317.

Lindsy Van Gelder writes for Ms., The New York Daily News, Town & Country, Rolling Stone *and other magazines. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,1416.*

Your Passport to Travel Information

by Lindsy Van Gelder

When I recently got an assignment from a travel magazine to write an article about the castles of the Scottish highlands, I thought, it's a good thing I have access to CompuServe! When planning a business or pleasure trip abroad, I know my modem is a passport to information on everything from how to get there to where to stay.

First, I checked with the Department of State's Worldwide Travel Advisory (GO STATE), a continuously updated database on "warfare, political unrest, hotel/motel shortages, currency, regulations and other information of interest to the American traveler." If the Macbeth clan started a major feud with the Macduffs, I'd find it here. But things are apparently calm in Scotland.

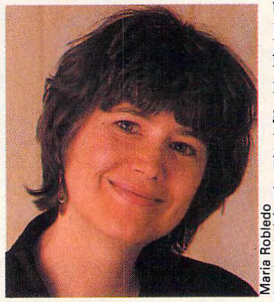
Next I wandered over to Air Information/Reservations (GO FLIGHTS) and chose Travelshopper, which provides information on the availability of commercial airline flights worldwide—as well as comparisons of fares. Although anyone can browse in Travelshopper, those who enroll can also book flights online, 24 hours a day. (Enrollment, which is free, also entitles you to membership in the TWA and Northwest frequent flyer programs, with a 3,000-mile bonus for joining.)

Then I followed easy directions to find the availability of flights from New York to Prestwick/Glasgow on June 15. Travelshopper can display the availability of flights on particular airlines, and I picked one whose frequent flyer club I'm already a member of. The airline's only flight that day was routed through London's Heathrow airport at dinnertime—which made me think I might prefer to spend the night in London and head to Scotland the following day. Would this be more expensive?

Travelshopper showed me a list of all available one-way and round-trip fares for both legs of my journey, as well as a list of restrictions for each fare. A quick comparison showed me that I wouldn't lose any money if I broke my journey in London. Just for the heck of it, I compared the fares and schedules from London to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow—all possible starting points for my trip. I tentatively decided to fly into Edinburgh.

If I were taking a pleasure trip, I might have next headed over to the WorldWide Exchange (GO WWX), where I could make arrangements to swap my New York apartment for someone else's London mews house or Highlands cottage. But since this was a business trip, I took a look at the ABC Worldwide Hotel Guide (GO ABC).

The guide prompted me for the country and city of interest, and told me that there are 35 hotels listed in Edinburgh. Before looking at the listings, I can narrow my search in numerous ways. For instance, I can specify which of five price ranges I'm interested in, whether I want a hotel in the center of town or near the airport, and whether I require such amenities as a conference or business center, an in-hotel restaurant or a fitness center.



Maria Robledo

Online journey: *Van Gelder*

I soon had a much smaller list to read. Each listing contains a capsule description of the hotel (including its decor), and such information as which credit cards are accepted, parking and even whether pets are allowed. I'm not planning to bring a Border collie, but I like the sound of the King James Thistle on Leith Street, which has both a cabaret featuring Scottish music and a French brasserie—bagpipes without haggis, the best of all possible worlds.

Information USA has a special section on travel abroad (GO IUS-1551). Here you can find where to get free information from the federal government on the countries you plan to visit and how to borrow foreign-language training books and tapes from the government through your local library. The service also offers addresses and telephone numbers for those needing information on coping with various emergencies overseas.

Exchange rates are also available online for North and South America, Europe, Asia, Australia and other countries. For more information, type GO INDICATORS.

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*Includes Schwab's 1988 rate increases (Telephone Survey 3/88)

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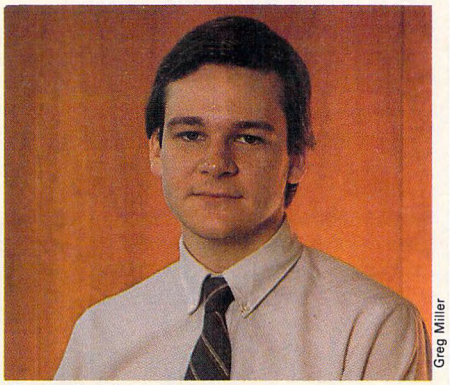
120 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005

GO OLI or circle 8 on the Reader Service Form. 149

Tip of the Month

Will Cowman, a senior at Ohio State University, is studying cognitive modeling, the study of the mind and our ability to duplicate its capabilities through technology. He is also interested in CompuServe's live conferencing.

Will advises subscribers who have not yet downloaded a file from a CompuServe forum to follow five steps: type GO IBMNEW, join the forum (if you haven't already), type DL1 (Library 1) at the forum's main menu, type READ DL.HLP and read this file.



Greg Miller

Featuring forums: *Cowman*

Ask Customer Service

Q: Why isn't there a local CompuServe number in my city?

A: In more than 85 percent of the metropolitan United States, subscribers can access CompuServe with a local call. CompuServe considers many factors in determining the locations for new local access points. A major factor is the amount of potential usage by home and business subscribers. The presence of local TYMNET and Telenet numbers is also considered.

New CompuServe numbers are announced via EasyPlex and also in the weekly "What's New" online (GO NEW). To obtain the most current list of access numbers in your area, type GO PHONES from any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

Q: What is a LATA Network?

A: LATA (Local Access Telephone Area) networks are gaining popularity in areas not providing local CompuServe access. A LATA is a demographic region that effectively increases the size of a local calling area. There are 190 LATAs in the United States and these are governed by the local and regional Bell Operating Companies (BOC). In several states, the BOCs have installed telecommunications equipment within their LATAs to provide data communications at competitive rates with TYMNET and Telenet. For information on LATA availability and instructions, type GO LOG-1 and then Select Option 2 (Log-on/Log-off Instructions) at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

Q: How can I access CompuServe from outside the United States?

A: As long as you have access to a telephone line that is compatible with your modem, you can access CompuServe from anywhere in the world. To make log-on procedures easier, however, the Computer Sciences Corp. maintains local direct access in 18 foreign countries. Type GO CSCNET for a list of these numbers online. In addition to CSC, many other countries maintain packet-switched networks, which are governed by the Postal, Telephone and Telegraph agencies within each nation. In many cases, it is more economical to "subscribe" to the local PTT in order to access CompuServe from overseas. A subscriber of a PTT would make a local call from his or her international location. When connected to the PTT's node, the subscriber enter the necessary codes to access international network lines linked to CompuServe and then simply enter the User ID number and password when prompted.

Please note that a CompuServe subscription is also required if you use a PTT network to call CompuServe. For additional information, type GO INTERNATIONAL at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

—Tom Ulrich

These answers and more are available in Customer Service's Question & Answer Database. You can find answers to questions about billing, logging on, using forums, sending EasyPlex messages, using the Personal File area, setting up a Personal Menu and more. Type GO QUESTIONS at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

Gift of Time

Online Today offers subscribers the chance to win 10 hours of standard service connect time (a $60 value) by writing a 200-word essay on how they use CompuServe's Information Service.

The essay should be typed, double-spaced and sent to *Online Today*, CompuServe Incorporated, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., P.O. Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220, or via an EasyPlex message to 70003,3246. Please include your full name, address and User ID number.

The winning essay will be published in *Online Today*.

CompuServe Expands World

Although I am a new subscriber, I have discovered already how much CompuServe has allowed me to have greater contact with other people and easier access to information.

I am a 32-year-old woman, who works from home because of a physical disability and chronic illness. CompuServe helps me personally as well as professionally. Due to my mobility impairment, it is often difficult for me to go out for shopping or meetings. CompuServe allows me to shop from home and meet others with similar interests in the forums.

In addition, I can do research as a professional historian through IQuest, which saves me from the physical exertion of spending hours in the library. IQuest has also increased my opportunities for further consultant work, because I can now "go" to the library as often as an able-bodied historian.

CompuServe allows me to accomplish my goals without depleting my physical strength. Because of CompuServe, I am less handicapped by my disability.

Donna Natalie Wilkes
Washington, D.C.

Want to Read More Hardware Reviews?

GO OLT-220 from any prompt in the CompuServe Information Service and choose this month's reviews from the main menu.

ONLINE TODAY

Slimline Tandy 102 Portable Computer

Succeeds the Model 100

Radio Shack
A Division of Tandy Corp.
1700 One Tandy Center
Fort Worth, TX 76102
817/390-3549

Features: 80C85 microprocessor; 2.4 MHz clock; 24K standard RAM expandable to 32K; ROM-based BASIC; 40 by 8 Liquid Crystal Display; integral direct-connect 300-baud modem; built-in parallel, RS-232C serial, cassette tape and bar-code reader interfaces; includes five ROM-based software programs.
Optional Items: Any attachable printer; 23-3806 Disk/CRT display unit; Tandy Bar Code Reader; CCR-81 cassette recorder.
System used for test: Standard Tandy 102 portable computer with Epson FX-80+ printer.
List Price: $499

Reviewed by James Moran

Portable, but powerful: *Slimline Tandy 102*

The Slimline Tandy 102 is a handy, lightweight computer that has a footprint about the size of a sheet of typewriter paper. Weighing slightly more than 3 pounds, the unit is less than 2 inches high, and there is no argument that it is a true portable. With a unit this size, you won't have any problem carrying it around, and its built-in features make it a natural on-the-road substitute for the computer used at home or at the office.

The Tandy 102 is the successor to the TRS-80 Model 100. Although the newer unit is lighter and smaller, Tandy says it has virtually the same operating characteristics. Indeed, starting the 102's interpreter brings up a Model 100 copyright notice for BASIC. The variety of software I ran on the 102 seemed to bear out Tandy's claim that the machine is compatible with all Radio Shack hardware and software for the Model 100.

The Tandy 102 features a 40-character by eight-line LCD display with large upper- and lowercase characters. The display isn't backlit and can be difficult to read under less than optimum lighting conditions. However, the large character size helps alleviate that problem, making a well-lit display one of the more readable I've seen.

The full-size, 56-key, typewriter-style keyboard has an embedded 10-key datapad, eight programmable function keys, four command keys and four cursor-control keys. The keys don't have enough downward travel for my taste, but the tactile and audio feedbacks are acceptable, even for heavy keyboard use. Except for the cursor-control keys, the keyboard looks and feels identical to that of the Tandy 200.

The back panel provides an expansion port with access to the system bus, plus interfaces to connect RS-232C serial devices, parallel printers, a cassette drive and a telephone. With proper cables, a standard video monitor (or television) and a disk drive can be connected through the system bus.

Two drives are available: a 184K 5.25-inch drive and a portable 100K 3.5-inch drive. Neither was supplied with the computer *Online Today* received for evaluation, but both have been proven parts of Tandy's product line for some time.

A slide-out panel on the bottom of the computer provides access to a set of open sockets. One socket can expand the 102 to its maximum 32K RAM capacity. The other allows ROM-based software, such as Multiplan or an advanced word processor, to be used.

The 102 includes five built-in ROM software programs, namely TEXT, ADDRSS, SCHEDL, TELCOM and BASIC. These provide text editing, address/telephone filing, appointment scheduling, telecommunications and BASIC programming. Most are barebones, but they are powerful enough to be useful. Users who need more power can add a disk drive and appropriate disk-based software.

Were I to pick a single item that would most improve the 102's built-in ROM software, I'd suggest that the TELCOM communications software be upgraded to include at least XMODEM protocol for transferring files. The XON/XOFF method supplied, simply isn't adequate, particularly since a portable computer is apt to be used when and where quiet telephone connections may be difficult to come by. Other than this one shortcoming, TELCOM provides more than adequate facilities for using the Tandy 102's built-in 300-baud auto-dial modem.

The computer operates up to 20 hours on four AA alkaline batteries, and an inexpensive AC power supply is available. Internal nickel-cadmium batteries maintain memory for 30 days if power is off, and they're automatically recharged from the AA batteries or AC power. I stuck the 102 in a closet for more than a month, without any batteries installed, and the unit didn't lose a byte of the textfile that was in memory.

I like the Tandy 102. For the price, I hadn't expected a portable with as much built-in power. The 102 was easy to operate and didn't require much time for me to become proficient at operating its built-in programs. Although it will not store more than 32K of data without optional disk drives, it is perfect for anyone who has access to an information service or a dial-up computer. In all, this is an inexpensive portable I would recommend to anyone who travels.

James Moran is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

GO OLI or circle 9 on the Reader Service Form.

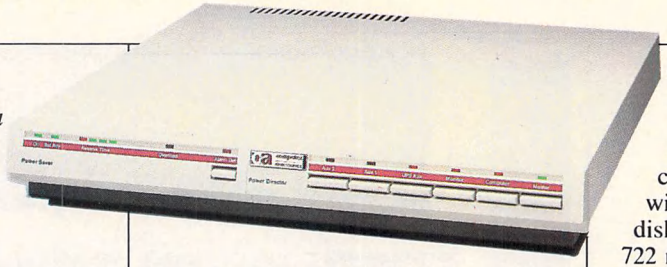
Power Saver Plus

Protects Hardware and Data from Power Problems

Computer Accessories Corp.
6610 Nancy Ridge Dr.
San Diego, CA 92121
619/457-5500

Computer: Virtually any combination of up to five computers and peripherals that can be powered by a 15-ampere line.
Operating System: Not applicable.
Features: Slimline design; five switchable power outlets (three backed up by battery); 1,800-watt total Power Director conditioned AC output; 400-watt optimized square wave UPS output with four to eight millisecond typical sense and transfer time; audible power-failure alarm; push-push action switches with individual LED power indicators; shielded casing; built-in surge protection for all connected devices and for modem telephone line; static-discharge plate; meets IEEE 587 Category A and B performance standards.
Options: External battery pack ($199.95) for extending holdup time by a factor of 21/2.
Base Price: $699.95 suggested retail.

Reviewed by Ernest E. Mau



Preventing problems: *Power Saver Plus*

Power Saver Plus takes the hassles out of finding outlets, routing cords and reaching switches, and it conditions AC power and provides battery backup for connected devices.

This 29-pound, 15- by 14.8- by 2.4-inch device can fit under a monitor and has five switched outlets designated "computer," "monitor," "UPS aux," "aux 1" and "aux 2." All are protected against surges, spikes and line noise, but the first three also provide uninterruptible power. Two modular telephone jacks guard against telephone line surges when using a modem.

The manufacturer calls this an uninterruptible power supply, but true UPS units continuously power equipment through the battery. Power Saver Plus actually is a standby supply since power switches to battery only when line power cuts off or drops below 102 VAC. Switchover usually takes four to eight milliseconds (10 milliseconds maximum), but it does occur.

The front panel's right half presents six power directing switches. Five correspond to outlets and have red LEDs that illuminate when outlets are on. A sixth master switch turns the unit and all connected devices on or off, and a green LED lights when line power is applied.

The left side houses the UPS. An on indicator shows that the UPS is powered but seems superfluous since the UPS is on if the master switch has been pressed.

A battery-ready indicator should show when the battery is charged, but it didn't behave as expected. After a deep discharge that killed power to connected devices, this ready indicator illuminated immediately when line power was restored, but the battery couldn't have recharged that soon.

An overload indicator lights if devices connected to the three UPS outlets draw more than the 400 watts that Power Saver Plus can deliver. This feature prevents overloading that could cause premature loss of power. Incidentally, 400 watts is more than enough for an IBM-compatible computer, a monitor and an additional device such as a modem or external disk drive. Putting a printer on a UPS outlet isn't recommended. The power a printer draws generally shortens the holdup time too much. Besides, printouts can be restarted when line power is restored.

An alarm defeat switch and indicator work together. During a line power interruption or brownout, the unit provides both audible and visual alarms. The switch turns off the audible beeper. Even with the beeper off, however, the unit emits a distinct buzzing noise while running on battery.

Four reserve-time indicators show how much battery charge is left. Holdup time is a function of the connected load, with advertised times ranging from 10 minutes for Compaq 286 and 386 machines to 30 minutes for an IBM PS/2 Model 30. The official rating is three minutes at full load or eight minutes at half load. On first switching to battery, all reserve time indicators should illuminate. According to the manual, one should go dark when the battery is 25 percent depleted, another at 50 percent, another at 75 percent and the last at 100 percent depletion.

Relating indicators to time requires calibrating the system by connecting devices and timing the depletion rate for that setup. I connected a Proteus 286GTX computer (12 MHz 80286 machine with a 20MB hard disk and two diskette drives), an Amdek Color 722 monitor and a dual 15MB Sysgen DuraPak external drive system. From full charge, the first reserve time indicator went out at four minutes 15 seconds, the second at six minutes 50 seconds, the third at eight minutes 46 seconds and the fourth at nine minutes 42 seconds. Connected devices shut down for lack of power at 10 minutes 29 seconds.

Ten minutes doesn't sound like much, but reserve power isn't meant to keep equipment running throughout extended blackouts or brownouts. Instead, it provides time to save work in progress and shut down in an orderly manner. Users should begin shutting down when a reserve unit activates, and there is no excuse for not completing a shutdown within a minute or two.

Power Saver Plus specifications state that battery recharge time is eight hours. But after running the battery down, all four reserve time indicators would illuminate after less than two hours of recharging. Here, too, the unit has an advantage since it need only be plugged in, not switched on, to recharge.

Having suffered many costly power-related data losses early in my computing career, I'm an advocate of reserve power. I've used many standby and uninterruptible supplies, but Power Saver Plus is among the best. Its holdup time and fast switchover meet my needs. The price tag may be too steep for casual computerists, but business and professional users should find the security it offers worth the money.

Ernest E. Mau, a full-time, free-lance writer and Online Today *reviews editor, is based in Aurora, Colo. He is the author of several books and nearly 300 articles on microcomputer products and applications.*

GO OLI or circle 10 on the Reader Service Form.

Go Online for More Hardware Reviews

The following hardware reviews are available this month in *Online Today Daily Edition* (GO OLT-220).

Hercules InColor Card
Manufacturer: *Hercules Computer Technology Inc.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

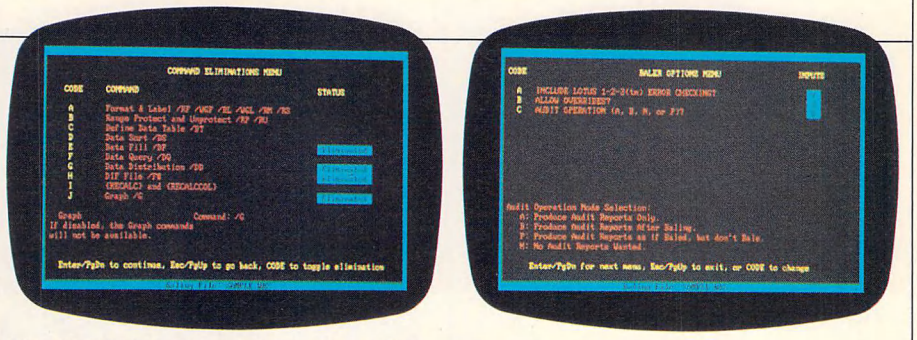
Baler:

Made for Spreadsheets, not Leaky Boats

Brubaker & Associates
8825 N. County Line Rd. E.
Lafayette, IN 47905
317/564-2584 or 800/327-6108

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 and compatibles.
Operating System: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Requires one diskette drive and a hard disk.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: None.
Other Requirements: Lotus 1-2-3 release 1A, 2.0 or 2.01, or compatibles (VP Planner, Twin, Symphony and SuperCalc 4); also requires Microsoft QuickBASIC included in package. Optional Items: Math coprocessor; CGA, PGA, EGA, VGA and Hercules video displays are supported.
System used for test: 640K Compaq Deskpro 286 with one 1.2MB diskette drive, one 40MB hard disk, Vega VGA card and NEC Multisync II monitor.
List Price: $495

Reviewed by Harry Green


COMMAND ELIMINATIONS MENU
CODE
COMMAND
STATUS
Enter-PgDn to continue, Esc/PgUp to go back, CODE to toggle elimination
BALER OPTIONS MENU
INPUTS
Enter-PgDn for next menu, Esc/PgUp to exit, or CODE to change

Creating BASIC source files: *Baler offers advantages*

The term "baling" will be misunderstood on farms, where it is a process for storing hay, and in Silicon Valley, where it's something done when a boat leaks.

I'll preface this review by explaining that baling herein relates to spreadsheets as compiling relates to high-level programming languages. A series of relatively easy-to-understand commands are compiled into machine language understood only by computers and people who wear plastic pencil holders.

Brubaker & Associates' Baler isn't a compiler in the strict sense of the word, but it creates BASIC source code that is compiled with Microsoft's QuickBASIC.

A logical first question is why compile a spreadsheet? Like BASIC, Lotus 1-2-3 is an interpreted language. The worksheet programs you write using high-level commands are interpreted and executed by the 1-2-3 program each time a worksheet is processed. Baler converts the original spreadsheet into a freestanding program that can be executed without loading 1-2-3.

The analogy with BASIC isn't perfect, but it is a good guide to understanding Baler. If you write a BASIC program, you can run it only after BASIC is loaded into your computer. If you run the source code through a compiler, you create an independent program that can be run by typing its name. Baler does the same for a spreadsheet. Not everyone needs a copy of 1-2-3 to run the compiled spreadsheet. Although a Baler file cannot be run without auxiliary programs included in the package, you're automatically granted a license to pass those programs to others so they can use your Lotus templates.

Baler is easy to use if you know 1-2-3. The documentation is easy to follow and, if you observe the manual, Baler operation is almost foolproof.

The first step is to condition your Lotus worksheet by applying the "range unprotect" command to cells that will become inputs. Baler recognizes four types of cells: blank, value, label and fixed label. Blank cells contain no entries. Value cells contain numeric entries or formulas. Label cells contain non-numeric entries, such as column heads. A fixed label cell is the same as a label except that it cannot be used as an input cell.

An optional step deletes blank cells with one of Baler's utility programs, CLEANWK. This reduces the compiled worksheet size and increases execution speed.

After conditioning a worksheet, call Baler together with the name of the spreadsheet to be compiled. A first menu offers three choices. One does the same error-checking that Lotus does and finds, for example, divide-by-zero conditions that result in error messages. A second allows or prevents the operator's overriding formulas. The third controls audit operations used to proof the spreadsheet.

A second menu then lets you permit or restrict certain commands to the operator.

After you've finished that, Baler does the rest. The program completes a series of steps to create a BASIC source file. Then Baler provides some statistics about the spreadsheet and automatically calls Microsoft's QuickBASIC to compile it into an executable program. A compiled spreadsheet resembles the original except for a different startup menu and an abbreviated command line. Unprotected cells are shown in a different color or intensity, and you can specify colors of different cell types with a utility program.

Whereas compilation increases the execution speed of BASIC programs, all spreadsheets I compiled slowed somewhat. In a timing test, one spreadsheet that recalculated in 12 seconds within 1-2-3 required 18 seconds in the compiled version. This usually isn't a serious handicap, however, and you do gain the benefit of a spreadsheet that nobody can alter unless you've granted them permission in the original compilation.

Baler also includes a utility program that helps you create menus so your spreadsheets are more like programs and less like spreadsheets.

Baler works with programs other than 1-2-3. I tried it with Paperback Software's 1-2-3 clone called VP Planner, and it worked equally well.

If you create spreadsheets only for your own use, you'll have little need for Baler. But if you create templates for others to use, Baler offers significant advantages. For example, you could sell a template without limiting your market to 1-2-3 owners. If you work in a large company where people share Lotus templates, a single copy of Baler can repay its investment many times because many users need their own copies of 1-2-3 only to run applications someone else created. In such situations, Baler is well worth its cost and the extra time needed to compile spreadsheets.

Harry Green is a free-lance writer from Portland, Ore. He writes about telecommunications, office automation and personal computer-related topics. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.

GO OLI or circle 11 on the Reader Service Form.

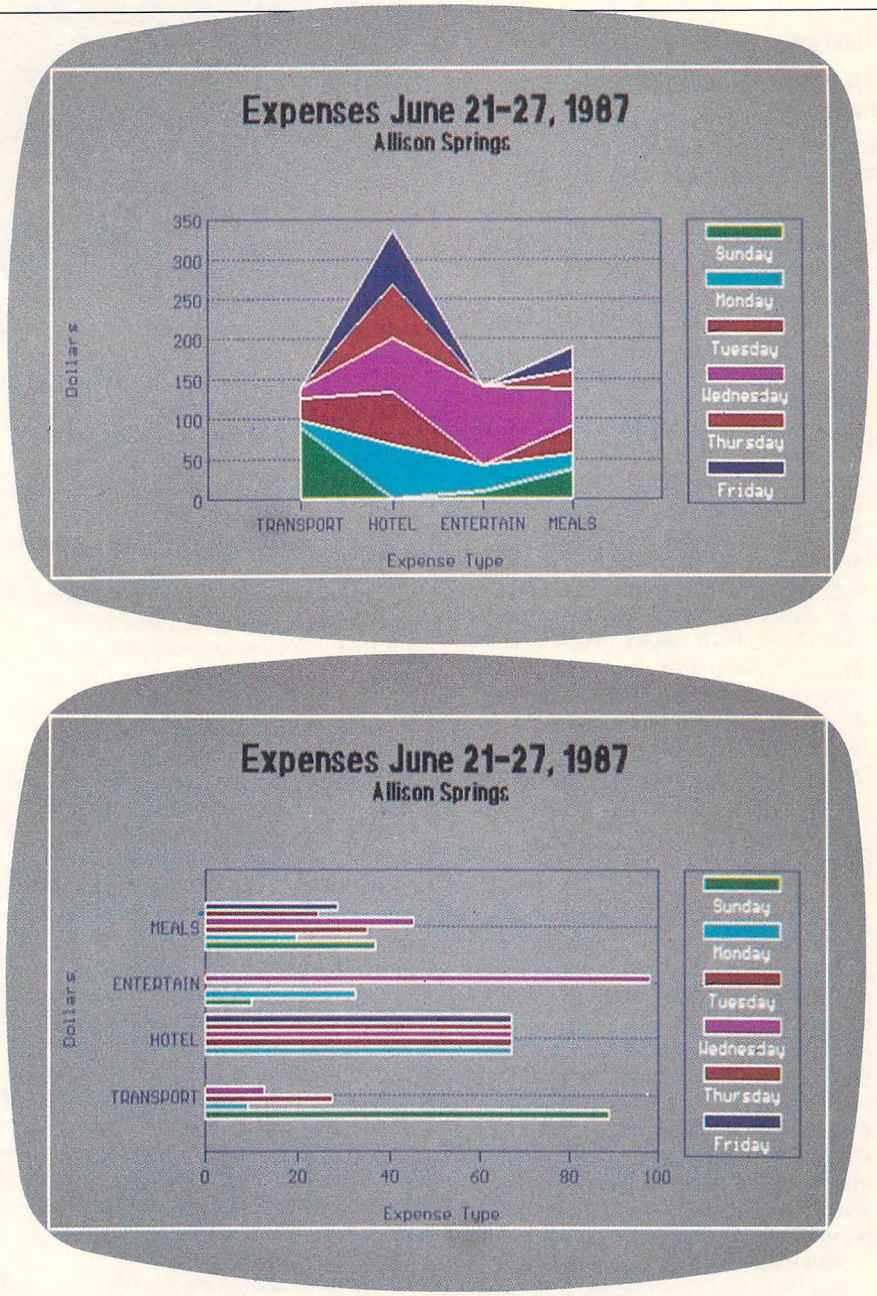
Borland's Quattro:

A Spreadsheet with Graphics

Borland International
4585 Scotts Valley Dr.
Scotts Valley, CA 95066
408/438-8400

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher (3.0 or higher for PS/2).
Media: Supplied on three 5.25-inch diskettes and two 3.5-inch diskettes; requires two diskette drives or one diskette drive and a hard disk.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Printer.
Other Requirements: Minimum 512K RAM.
Optional Items: Hard disk recommended.
System used for test: 1024K TeleVideo TeleCat-286 with Hercules Graphics Card Plus, two diskette drives, Control Data 40MB hard disk and LaserJet Series II printer; running PC-DOS 3.3.
List Price: $195

Reviewed by William J. Lynott



Vastly improved version: *Quattro spreadsheet/graphics program*

Make no mistake. Quattro (version 1.0) from Borland International is a winner. This spreadsheet/graphics program is a vast improvement over current versions of Lotus 1-2-3, and I've been a dedicated 1-2-3 user since I switched from VisiCalc in 1983.

Quattro is an evolutionary product designed to satisfy the shortcomings of its predecessors, including 1-2-3, and it does a marvelous job. Whether Quattro will break the Lotus stranglehold on the spreadsheet market remains to be seen, but I suspect Quattro's going to make itself felt in short order.

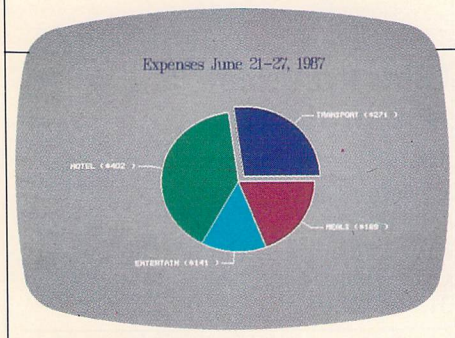
Let's start with setup and installation. There is none. Hard-disk users just copy all Quattro files to the hard disk. The first time Quattro loads, it detects the hardware lineup and sets its defaults automatically. That is joy compared with the time-consuming routines required by most popular spreadsheet packages. Diskette users have an additional step or two, but they are easy and fast.

Quattro's display screen uses the familiar row-and-column format of most spreadsheets. It has a crisp, clean look enhanced by highlighting the current row and column in reverse video.

Quattro is completely compatible with 1-2-3. Not only does it import and read 1-2-3 files directly, it also can save files in 1-2-3 format if you choose. I tested compatibility by importing several complex 1-2-3 files. All but one worked fine, and it was a particularly large file with a complex macro and interrelated menu structure. The problem with it may have been my failure to assign range names instead of cell addresses for ranges.

If you have ever had to recalculate a very large spreadsheet with 1-2-3, you know that the job can take a long time while 1-2-3 recalculates every formula cell in the spreadsheet. Quattro uses "smart" recalculation. That is, it recalculates only cells affected by any changes made since the last recalculation. I clocked recalculation time for one huge template. Lotus did the job in 23 seconds, but Quattro did the same job in 3 seconds, which is a startling difference.

In deference to Lotus' market dominance, Quattro's developers have made it so compatible with 1-2-3 that you can alter defaults to make it look like 1-2-3. Thus, an alternate menu tree with the familiar Lotus commands can be used instead of the Quattro menu. However,



Superior graphics: *Quattro*

Quattro's own menus have commands that aren't available in 1-2-3, so you are better off taking a little time to learn the Quattro choices, even if you are already familiar with Lotus menus.

Incidentally, Quattro displays menus in a box on the right side of the screen. If you don't care for either menu tree, Quattro also lets you build your own customized version.

Quattro's graphics are far superior to 1-2-3's graphics. It offers 10 types of graphs and far more customizing control over their appearance. Two especially attractive graphs are three-dimensional bar and area graphs, neither of which is available in 1-2-3 release 2.01. In a much needed improvement, Quattro lets you select both font type and size for title lines, and numerous other customizing choices, including shading patterns, letting you control almost every detail of a completed graph.

I've seen stand-alone graphics packages that don't offer the versatility or quality of graphics available in Quattro. And all graphing work, including viewing and printing, can be done from within a worksheet. Quattro has no cumbersome access hierarchy.

Quattro supports a long list of printers including laser models. It also can write a graph file to disk in 1-2-3's PIC format, which can be important for users who export graphics to other software.

Quattro also includes SQZ!, a file-compression utility that greatly reduces the storage area needed by large spreadsheet files.

Creating Quattro macros is easy. Instead of memorizing keystrokes, execute the task and record the keystrokes as a macro. No muss or fuss. Unlike 1-2-3, which limits macros to 27 per spreadsheet, there is no limit on macros in Quattro files.

However, Quattro shows little improvement over 1-2-3 when it comes to database management. While this may disappoint some users, it doesn't bother me. I feel that database management is best left to stand-alone database management systems.

In all, Quattro is simply a better package than 1-2-3, and it is only about half the price. While it may not be practical for all present 1-2-3 users to switch, I would find it difficult to choose 1-2-3 over Quattro if I were a first-time buyer.

William J. Lynott is president of W.J. Lynott Associates, a management consulting firm in suburban Philadelphia. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,420.

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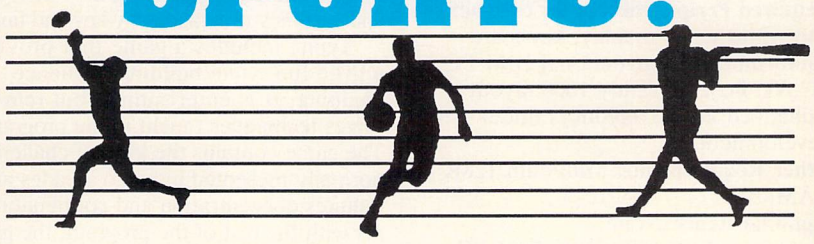

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Centerville, UT 84014
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Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2, PCjr and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS and MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Supplied on 5.25-inch diskettes; 3.5-inch PS/2 diskettes are available for an additional $5 on returning original diskettes.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Color or black-and-white video display; keyboard conforming to conventional IBM PC, PC-AT, PCjr or Tandy 1000 layout (enhanced PC-AT layout is under development).
Other Requirements: Minimum 128K RAM.
Optional Items: None.
System used for test: 640K IBM PC with 360K diskette drive, 20MB hard disk, Epson FX-80+ printer and Princeton HX-12E color monitor; running PC-DOS 3.10.
List Price: $59.95

Reviewed by James Moran

Those who use keyboards, whether on computers or typewriters, know how frustrating it can be to hunt and peck for a letter or number. Typist teaches novices how to type and turns experienced typists into experts by breaking slovenly habits.

Typist pays homage to four success principles: performance improves when it is measured and reported; stimulus and response should be tied closely together; users should control the options while the program controls the details; and true motivation is internal. This high-performance keyboard tutor applies these principles to make anyone a better typist in a minimum time.

Typing students should be concerned not only with hitting the right keys, but also with keystroke speed. Early in the program, Typist shows users how fast they strike keys with graphics displayed on the screen.

In addition to standard touch-typing methods, Typist emphasizes muscle memory. Students repeat drills that emphasize common letter combinations to instill automatic finger movements.

Once manual skills for typing are developed, Typist's presentation mode for practice teaches users to read and process blocks of information for quicker recognition. A "flash" mode displays practice words and sentences. When the first letter of a word is typed, the remainder of the word disappears. This flashing encourages less conscious interpretation of individual letters and fosters quicker execution of correct typing sequences.

Testing within Typist gives users a chance to evaluate their abilities and provides several mechanisms for corrective practice. Up to 13 test texts can be run for varying periods of time. Following each test, graphic presentations alert users not only to words-per-minute and error rates, but also to speed and accuracy evaluations by key and finger.

Typist includes a game that provides a little fun while building sequence chaining. It is entertaining, but reinforces techniques taught in the program. The game contains the kind of challenge normally presented in video arcades and requires concentration and coordination. As with the rest of the program, the game can be adjusted for skill levels.

Typist is appropriate for all ages and experience levels, and it is a great skill builder. The program can teach up to 10 users at any time, while it tracks their progress through the teaching modules. Any user can return to Typist, and the program will start where it left off for that user. This feature can be overridden to start at a specific lesson or skill level.

The current version specifically supports keyboards following conventional IBM PC, PC-AT, PCjr and Tandy 1000 key layouts. Provisions for the 101-key enhanced PC-AT keyboard are under development. Adapting the program to a supported keyboard requires copying a particular layout file into a master keyboard file. Although there is no facility for mapping non-standard key layouts into the program, the actual key placement is of little importance once a student progresses beyond the initial graphic learning screens.

This little-publicized program may be one of the best typing tutors and skill builders available.

James Moran is the editor of Compu-Syn, *a syndicated news service that specializes in computers and robotics. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

GO OLI or circle 14 on the Reader Service Form.

Clan Practical Accountant

Menu-Driven Accounting Program

Sir-Tech Software
P.O. Box 245
Charlestown Ogdensburg Mall
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
315/393-6633

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and 100 percent compatibles (no specific mention of PS/2 support or program availability on 3.5-inch diskettes); version available for the Apple II series computers.
Operating Systems: MS-DOS or PC-DOS version 2.0 or higher; version available for Apple II.
Media: Supplied on one 5.25-inch diskette; requires at least one diskette drive.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Monochrome or color (CGA or EGA) monitor and video adapter.
Other Requirements: Minimum 128K RAM.
Optional Items: Hard disk; printer (supports more than two dozen printers).
System used for test: 512K Victor V286 computer with one 1.2MB diskette drive, one 20MB hard disk, EGA color monitor and Apple LaserWriter printer.
List Price: $79.95

Reviewed by Franklyn Jones

Clan Practical Accountant is an entry-level accounting program that is ideal for people who know nothing about accounting. The program is based on double-entry accounting in which each transaction is recorded in two separate accounts: one representing the sources of funds, and the other representing the destinations. CPA maintains four separate but related categories of accounts—income, expenses, assets and liabilities.

Although CPA is a low-end program, it offers capabilities useful to personal investors and owners of small businesses. For example, it can maintain up to 128 separate accounts in each category. In addition, CPA can automatically record transactions that occur regularly and involve fixed expenses, such as salaries or rent. The operator merely confirms the transactions at the right time.

Individual entries in any account, however, cannot exceed $999,999.99,

which means million-dollar transactions cannot be handled by CPA.

CPA comes on one diskette, so hard-disk installation takes only seconds and creates a CPA subdirectory in the process. If there is a color monitor in the system, CPA will ask if you want color support and what colors you want.

CPA is completely menu-driven, which is both an asset and a liability. All menus use the first letter of the menu option to activate each selection. For example, from the main menu you can type E to enter transactions or L to list the chart of accounts.

On the positive side, the menu system makes CPA easy to use. Unfortunately, it also makes the program difficult to learn. There are so many layers of menus (I counted 15 different menus) that it is easy to become confused about locations in the hierarchy.

Sir-Tech tries to deal with this problem in two ways. First, each screen has a code in the upper-right corner that helps you keep track of where you are. If that doesn't work, the package comes with a large wall chart that diagrams all menu options. The fact that both "solutions" exist indicates that Sir-Tech is aware of the problem, but I hope future releases will be more streamlined.

Aside from this one annoyance, CPA is an excellent performer and offers several inviting features I would not have expected in a program of its price. For example, CPA can provide password security to control access to any confidential financial file. Another "hot key" feature lets you immediately check the current chart of accounts, no matter where you are in the program. Also, you can print reports in either 80- or 132-column formats, assuming your printer has that capability. And there is a handy pop-up calculator, summoned by touching a function key, which is useful for quick addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

The feature I like best, however, is CPA's Chart of Accounts Manager, which lets you maintain a library of different charts of accounts for a variety of financial applications. CPA comes with nine predefined charts for such things as managing rental property or a small business.

CPA's documentation includes the wall chart plus four short manuals: *Beginner's Guide, Tutorial Guide, Reference Guide* and a *Q&A Guide* (a detailed troubleshooting guide). The documentation starts with an explanation of basic accounting principles and walks the user through a sample financial file.

Someone with prior accounting knowledge may become frustrated with the extensive hand-holding this program provides and the program's limitations for complex business applications. But if you are an accounting novice or have often been intimidated by traditional accounting packages, Clan Practical Accountant may be for you.

Franklyn Jones was formerly the managing editor of Interface Age *magazine and editor-in-chief of* IBM PC Update *magazine. He has written articles for various computer publications, is a regular contributor to* Online Today *and serves as a marketing and communications consultant.*

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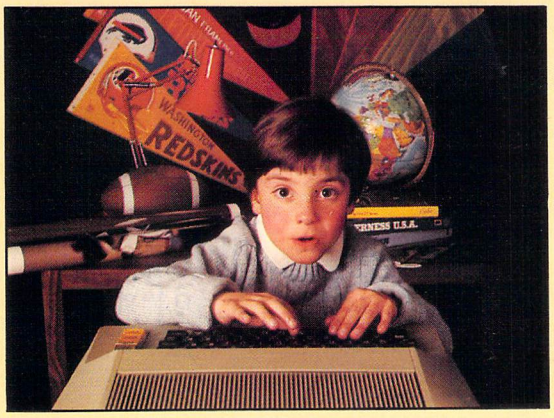

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LapLink

Connects Laptops and Desktops

Traveling Software
19310 N. Creek Parkway
Bothell, WA 98011
206/483-8088

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 and compatibles including MS-DOS laptop computers.
Operating System: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or later.
Media: Supplied on one 5.25-inch diskette and one 3.5-inch 720K diskette.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Connector cable is supplied.
Other Requirements: 197K of free memory in the desktop computer.
Systems used for test: (1) 2MB AST Premium/286 computer with 80287 math coprocessor, Genoa SuperEGA HiRes Video Adapter, Sony Multiscan monitor, 80MB hard disk and Logimouse C7 mouse; running MS-DOS 3.2. (2) 640K NEC MultiSpeed EL Computer with dual 3.5-inch diskette drives; running MS-DOS 3.20 at 9.54 MHz.
List Price: $129.95

Reviewed by Hardin Brothers

LapLink (version 2.05) is one of the few programs in my library that doesn't need documentation, although its manual is well-written. I contentedly used the program for two weeks before I opened the manual to see if there were any unused functions, and found that there was little I had missed.

LapLink can copy programs between disks or subdirectories on a single computer, but it is designed to move files from one computer to another, especially between desktop and laptop computers. If both computers have available 25-pin or 9-pin RS-232 serial ports, LapLink can copy files between them at up to 115,200 baud.

Once two computers are connected with LapLink's 8-foot serial cable, which has both 25-pin and 9-pin female connectors on each end, each must run the LapLink program to begin communications. LapLink displays each computer's default directory on one side of the screen and the other computer's directory on the other side, and you can instruct LapLink to sort contents by file name, extension, date or size.

Either computer can control file transfers, and you can switch between computer keyboards at almost any time. LapLink keeps the screens of both computers synchronized except that each computer always displays its own directory on the left side of its own screen. A menu bar at the bottom of each screen allows easy selection among LapLink's many functions.

LapLink's option menu can configure the program either permanently or for a single session on either computer. One option allows setting LapLink's transfer rate to speeds ranging from 9600 to 115,200 baud. Other options can select files by date ranges, select files modified since the last backup and specify whether files in subdirectories should be included in group file transfers. The one limitation in LapLink's option menu is that it only recognizes COM1 and COM2 serial ports, not COM3 or COM4 if they happen to be equipped.

Other LapLink functions allow moving to different drives and subdirectories, using DOS-like wildcards to select files, tagging groups of files to transfer with a single command, viewing textfiles, erasing and renaming files, and creating or moving through subdirectories. LapLink also can graphically display a disk's subdirectory organization.

Normally, LapLink transfers files in 8K blocks and performs error checking to ensure that a transfer is successful. If an error is detected, LapLink keeps resending a data block until the program is satisfied that the data have been transferred correctly. If two computers have difficulty communicating with each other, LapLink can be set to use smaller transfer blocks so it has fewer bytes to resend when it detects an error.

I tried to verify that LapLink really does send data at 115,200 baud. However, file transfer times seem to depend more on disk speeds than on the actual data transfer rate between computers. Moving a 230,000 byte file between my desktop and laptop computers took 43 seconds (5,350 bytes per second), while moving a 48,400 byte file took only 12 seconds (4,034 bytes per second). The difference seemed to be directly related to the number of times the computers accessed disk files. Both transfer speeds were significantly less than expected at 115,200 baud, but they are much faster than could be obtained within the 9600-baud limit of normal serial communications on an MS-DOS computer.

I accidentally found one annoying bug. While using my laptop's keyboard, I told LapLink to log into an empty disk drive in my desktop computer. The program refused to recognize that there was no diskette in that drive and locked up until I rebooted. However, the same command given from the desktop's keyboard resulted in an error message and LapLink gave me an option to retry or abort the operation.

Except for that one problem, LapLink performed flawlessly. If you have computers with different disk sizes, LapLink is a handy answer to the constant problem of transferring files between them. It completes its job quickly and easily, and you can use almost all of its features when you first boot up the program. Since I only transfer files between computers a few times a week, LapLink has been a far better solution for me than buying a special disk drive for either computer.

Hardin Brothers is an associate editor of 80 Micro *and a frequent contributor to several other magazines.*

GO OLI or circle 17 on the Reader Service Form.

Go Online for More Software Reviews

The following software reviews are available in *Online Today Daily Edition* by typing GO OLT-230 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt. Many daily-edition and some print-edition software reviews are supplemented with GIF graphics that may be viewed in or downloaded from Library 6 of the *Online Today* Readers' Forum (GO OLTFORUM).

Text-Pro II and Data-Pro II
Manufacturer: *COSMI*
Computers: *Apple IIe and IIc.*

Print Shop IIgs Graphics
Manufacturer: *Bröderbund Software.*
Computer: *Apple IIgs.*

Microsoft Windows 2 Operating Enviroment
Manufacturer: *Microsoft Corp.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

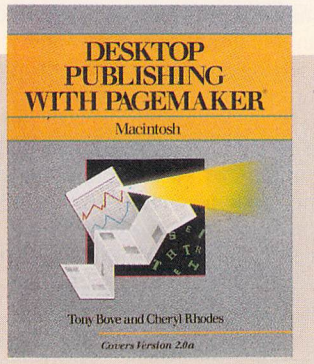
Black Magic Hypertext Word Processor
Manufacturer: *NTERGAID Inc.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

Partner PC Desktop Organizer
Manufacturer: *Timeworks Inc.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

DeskTop Art
Manufacturer: *Dynamic Graphics Inc.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles; Apple Macintosh.*

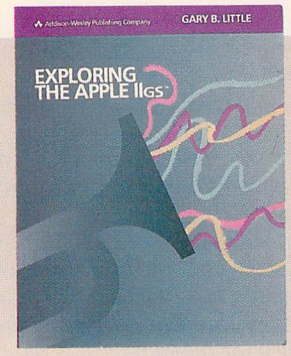
Online Book Reviews

Following are summaries of book reviews available for reading this month in *Online Today Daily Edition*. To read the complete reviews, type GO OLT-240 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.



Desktop Publishing with PageMaker: Macintosh
By Tony Bove and Cheryl Rhodes
John Wiley & Sons, 1987
289 pages, $19.95 (softcover)

Using examples from actual publications, this book is designed for those who have no training in page makeup and design but who want to learn desktop publishing. Reviewer Christine Graves says the book abounds with tips and techniques, and is a good resource for the desktop publishing process. *GO OLT-4020*

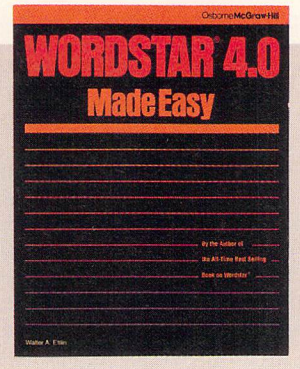


Exploring the Apple IIgs
By Gary B. Little
Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1987
535 pages, $22.95 (softcover)

As an in-depth, technical introduction to the Apple IIgs, this book is most appropriate for assembly language programmers. Reviewer Brian D. Monahan says it is an advanced book for sophisticated users—and those users will not be disappointed. *GO OLT-4040*

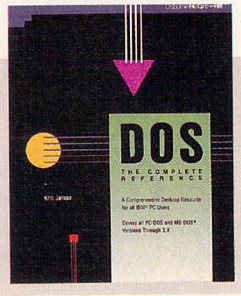
Using PageMaker for the PC
By Martin S. Matthews and
Carole Boggs Matthews
Osborne/McGraw-Hill, 1987
544 pages, $22.95 (softcover)

The focus of this beginners' book, according to reviewer Michael Naver, is not theories of publication design but rather detailed instructions on practical desktop publishing applications. You won't learn how to design a glossy magazine, but you will learn tips on forms, sales brochures, newsletters and catalogs. *GO OLT-4010*



WordStar 4.0 Made Easy
By Walter A. Ettlin
Osborne/McGraw-Hill, 1987
258 pages, $16.95 (softcover)

The most popular word processor has been updated, and this book explains its new secrets. Reviewer James Moran says this is a teaching manual that will encourage WordStar proficiency through instructions, exercises and practice text. *GO OLT-4030*



DOS: The Complete Reference
By Kris Jamsa
Osborne/McGraw-Hill, 1987
1,046 pages, $24.95 (softcover)

Reviewer Franklyn Jones calls this book one of the most comprehensive works on DOS he has seen. The most impressive aspect is the time and space given to detailed explanations of DOS commands, supported by relevant examples and illustrations. *GO OLT-4050*

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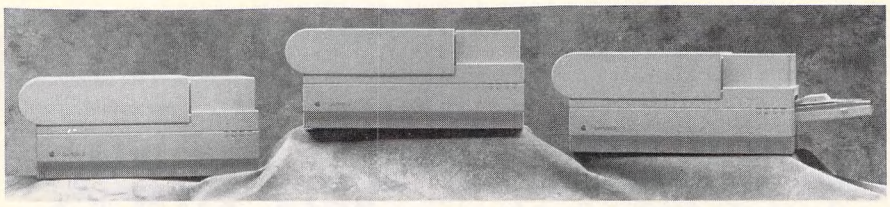

LaserWriter II Printer

Apple Computer has introduced the LaserWriter II family of desktop laser printers that span the range of activities from general office printing to sophisticated desktop publishing.

The LaserWriter IINTX is a 300 dot-per-inch expandable laser printer with networking capabilities and a PostScript interpreter. The LaserWriter IINT is Apple's mainstream, 300 dpi laser printer. The LaserWriter IISC is an entry-level, single-user laser printer offering 300 dpi full-page text and graphics. Retail prices range from $2,799 to $6,599.

For information, contact Apple Computer Inc., 20525 Mariani Ave., Cupertino, CA 95014; 408/996-1010.

Autosync Modem

Hewlett-Packard is installing its HP Portable Vectra CS computers with the new Hayes AutoSync 2400-baud modem, allowing users to communicate synchronously without using a synchronous data link control board.

The modem is installed in an expansion slot in the Portable Vectra and provides both asynchronous and synchronous communications capabilities in one device. Features include call-progress monitoring, enhanced diagnostic testing, 2-inch speaker and software volume control. The retail price of the HP Model D1003A modem is $695.

For information, contact Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc., P.O. Box 105203, Atlanta, GA 30348, 404/449-8791; or Hewlett-Packard Co., 19091 Pruneridge Ave., Cupertino, CA 95014, 408/447-1664.

Anchor PS/2 Modems

Anchor Automation has introduced the Anchor 1200PS and 2400PS modems designed for the IBM PS/2 models 50, 60 and 80.

Complete with Anchor-Talk software, the modems support foreground and background multitasking operations under IBM OS/2 operating system. The internal 1200/300- and 2400/1200/300-baud modems are 100 percent Hayes compatible and feature auto-answer, auto-dial, auto-redial and automatic speed detection. The retail price is $269 for the 1200PS and $349 for the 2400PS. Anchor-Talk software sells for an additional $49.95.

For information, contact Anchor Automation, 20675 Bahama St., Chatsworth, CA 91311; 818/998-6100.

Interface Device Makes Connection

The Universal Interface Device from Sidwell Development plugs into any multiline desk phone and connects to a modem, fax, recorder or dialer for transmission of data over any of the incoming lines at the desk.

Once the transmission is complete, the UID is switched, returning all lines to regular usage again. It is fully programmable and is compatible with more than 900 phone systems. The retail price is $189.

For information, contact Sidwell Development Ltd., R.R. 1, Box 267, Solon, IA 52333.

Safire Scholarship and Financial Aid Program

Artificial Logic has introduced Safire—Scholarship and Financial-aid Information Runtime Executive.

Safire contains comprehensive and up-to-date information on more than 1,000 scholarships, grants, contests and allowances for vocational, community, two-year, four-year, masters, doctorate and post-doctorate degrees. It is designed for the IBM PC and compatibles and sells for $59.95.

For information or to order, contact Artificial Logic, P.O. Box 3995, Champaign, IL 61821-0995; 217/351-8433.

US Robotics PS/2 Modem

US Robotics has introduced its second internal modem for the IBM Personal System/2 computers.

The Courier 2400/PS modem offers 2400/1200/300 baud with auto-dial and auto-answer features. Also included are help-screen summaries of modem command settings, on-screen call-progress monitoring, call-duration reporting and automatic speed matching with the remote modem. HyperACCESS data communications software is offered with the modem, which sells for $549 with the software, or $449 without it.

For information, contact US Robotics Inc., 8100 N. McCormick Blvd., Skokie, IL 60076; 312/982-5010.

Go Online for More Product Announcements

The following new product announcements are available this month in *Online Today Daily Edition* by typing GO OLT-250 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

GEM 1st Word Plus, *a full-featured word processor with graphical interface for the IBM PC family, PS/2 series and compatibles, Digital Research Inc.*

PC-Project, *project management system for the IBM PC and compatibles, Big Picture.*

101 Macros for Word Perfect, *add-on software to make Word Perfect easier to use, Macropac International.*

Tornado (version 1.70), *tool for the IBM PC family, PS/2 series and compatibles to process countless bits of random information, Computer Product Introductions Corp.*

Citation, *manages lists of literature references on MS-DOS and PC-DOS based computers, Rhislander Software.*

G-Whiz (version 1.02), *IBM PC and PS/2 utility for managing files on a hard disk or diskettes, Pico Publishing.*

Vaccine, *utility package that provides data protection, data security, system checks, system enhancements and data recovery functions for MS-DOS based computers, FoundationWare.*

PosterMaker Plus, *text-styling tool for desktop publishers, Bröderbund Software Inc.*

SQZ! Plus, *data compression and file utility for spreadsheets, Symantec Corp.*

Guidelines to Requesting Information Through OLI

Online Inquiry

Online Inquiry is *Online Today*'s electronic version of the traditional reader inquiry card. To request additional information about products or services described in *Online Today*, simply access CompuServe and type GO OLI at any prompt.

CompuServe Page OLI-1
ONLINE TODAY ADVERTISERS
ONLINE INQUIRY (OLI)

1. OLI Instructions
2. Online Today Display Ads
3. Print Edition Reviews
4. Shopper's Guide Mini-Ads

Display Ads

GO OLI-160. Inquiries to this section will be followed by a brief description of the *Online Today* ad. To request additional printed information, simply enter your name and address at the prompts. OLI will add your User ID number and electronically forward your request to the appropriate advertiser(s). The names, addresses and User ID numbers will also be forwarded via US Mail at the end of each month.

CompuServe Page OLI-160
ONLINE TODAY ADVERTISERS/OLI

1. June 1988 Advertisers
2. May 1988 Advertisers
3. April 1988 Advertisers

Editorial Articles/Reviews

At the end of each electronic version product review, you'll be asked if you wish to request further information through the Online Inquiry system. A "yes" response will let the system prompt you for your name, address and other information so that your request can be forwarded to the appropriate company. If you respond "no," the system will return you to the previous menu.

To request information about products reviewed in the print edition, go to page OLI-280 and select the appropriate listing, such as June Hardware Reviews. At the next menu, select the product you're interested in. If you answer "yes" at the question prompt, the OLI system will prompt you for the necessary information.

Requests to these sections will be stored and forwarded by traditional mail once each month.

CompuServe Page OLI-280
REVIEW LISTINGS/PRINT EDITION

1. June Hardware Listings
2. June Software Listings
3. June New Product Listings

Shopper's Guide

GO OLI-70 to get information about *Online Today*'s mini-ad program.

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CompuServe Page OLI-70
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June issue, not valid after September 1988.

U P D A T E

New Software Available in All Forums

CompuServe's improved forum software is available in all forums. Subscribers can easily switch between old and new forum software by using the OF (old forum) and NF (new forum) commands available at the Practice Forum menu. These commands will be supported for one year.

Practice new forum software skills in the free Practice Forum. A Forum Users Guide, Reference Card and a comparison list of commands is available in Library 1. GO PRACTICE

PC MagNet on CompuServe

PC MagNet, an information service dedicated to the readership and editorial content of *PC Magazine*, is available on CompuServe. PC MagNet features the ability to download utilities, find articles in back issues, get information, connect to *PC Magazine* editors, participate in conferences and upload submissions to several areas. GO PCMAGNET

Cancer Forum Offers Support

The Cancer Forum provides online support and cancer information for patients and their friends and relatives. The forum is staffed by doctors and technicians from the R.A. Bloch Cancer Management Center at the University of Missouri and volunteers at the Cancer Hotline in Kansas City, Mo. The forum is not intended to provide diagnosis or to endorse treatment methods. GO CANCER

Genealogists and Hobbyists Online

Experienced genealogists can post queries and obtain answers quickly and new genealogy hobbyists can get personalized guidance in the Genealogy Forum.

The forum libraries contain references, data sources and tips, such as how to find Italian or Mexican genealogy records. Addresses for departments of vital records, genealogy libraries and public archives are also available. Public-domain and shareware programs can be downloaded. GO ROOTS

Color Weather Maps Available

Color Weather Radar and Depiction Maps can be viewed online using a GIF-supporting communications program such as CompuServe's PC3. GIF display programs are available in the Picture Support Forum (GO PICS). GO COLMAPS

Photography Forum Opens New Section

The Photography Forum has opened Subtopic and Library 12 for sharing information about photographers' stock photo files and photo buyers' needs. Photographers can upload information to Library 12 in a keyword-searchable PRO-FILE, a brief resume detailing expertise and credits. Photo buyers can list specifications on Subtopic 12 of the message board or in Library 12. GO PHOTOFORUM

Boston Computer Exchange Online

The daily-updated Boston Computer Exchange offers hundreds of used computer accessories and equipment for sale. CompuServe subscribers can inquire online about any item listed in the database or leave a request to list used computer equipment with the BCE.

The BoCoEx Index, a weekly report of market prices and analysis of pricing trends for used computer equipment, is also available for a $1 surcharge per access. GO BCE

Travelshopper Adds Car Info

Travelshopper has added car availability, information and booking services.

Travelshopper prompts for the airport location, date of pickup, car agency and size preferences, and price range. Car rental and pricing information for the car pickup location is also provided. GO PARS

Opinion Poll in Election '88

CompuServe members can express opinions on issues surrounding this year's presidential election in the Election '88 Opinion Poll. Poll results will be available throughout the election year. Election '88 also features campaign-trail news, candidate profiles and CANDIDATEgrams. GO USA

Win Two Airline Tickets from Eaasy Sabre

Eaasy Sabre is sponsoring an online contest in which the winner will receive two round-trip airline tickets to a travel destination featured in the July issue of *Online Today*. Look for more details soon.

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